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THE ENGLISH JOURNAL

JANUARY 1912 V.1 no.1

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—Edwin M. Hopkins

The Aim of the English Course
—William D. Lewis

The School and Current Fiction
—Herbert Bates

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The National Council of Teachers of English: Proceedings of the First Annual Meeting

Significance of the National Council. Editorial

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THE ENGLISH JOURNAL

VOLUME I JANUARY 1912 NUMBER 1

CAN GOOD COMPOSITION TEACHING BE DONE UNDER PRESENT CONDITIONS?[1]

EDWIN M. HOPKINS
University of Kansas

No.

This is a small and apparently unprotected word, occupying a somewhat exposed position; but it is upborne by indisputable truth.

If another answer is possible, if good teaching can be done under present conditions, it is passing strange that so few teachers have found out how to do it; that English composition teachers as a class, if judged by criticism that is becoming more and more frequent, are so abnormally inefficient. For every year the complaints become louder that the investment in English teaching yields but a small fraction of the desired returns. Every year teachers resign, break down, perhaps become permanently invalided, having sacrificed ambition, health, and in not a few instances even life, in the struggle to do all the work expected of them. Every year thousands of pupils drift through the schools, half-cared for in English classes where they should have constant and encouraging personal attention, and neglected in other classes where their English should be watched over at least incidentally, to emerge in a more or less damaged linguistic condition, incapable of meeting satisfactorily the simplest practical demand upon their powers of expression. Much money is spent, valuable teachers are worn out at an inhumanly rapid rate, and results are inadequate or wholly lacking. From any point oi view—that of taxpayer, teacher, or pupil—such a situation is intolerable.

[1] For reference to the data upon which this article is based, see general note at the end.

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But every English composition teacher knows what is wrong; and every such teacher always has known. Perhaps every such teacher, at some time in his more or less brief career, has undertaken to explain the matter to someone in authority; perhaps to be told that it is all really too bad, but that nothing can be done. Perhaps not much can be done; but at least certain facts can be made public, and with the facts the pathetically simple explanation.

A single statement will explain the fundamental trouble. Not very many years ago, when effort was made to apply the principle that pupils should learn to write by writing, English composition, previously known as rhetoric, became ostensibly a laboratory subject, but without any material addition to the personnel of its teaching force; there was merely a gratuitous increase in the labor of teachers who were already doing full duty.

Teachers as individuals protested and have continued to protest, but no protest has hitherto availed. Probably no other laboratory subject has ever been introduced into any school till space enough and apparatus enough and teachers enough had been provided to insure to each pupil that degree of individual attention necessary to his individual development. But the laboratory teaching of English during all these years has had so little provision made for it that it has been, for the most part, little more than a travesty.

While victims of public ignorance and carelessness are at work in one room of a modern school, across the hall there is likely to be a laboratory in science or manual training. There the instructor spends long hours, but the student capacity of his room is limited; his work affords variety and opportunity to carry on personal investigation by the side of or with the aid of his pupils; and when his scheduled hours are ended his day's work is done; he retains opportunity for broad preparation, for personal scholarship, and even for relaxation. Because his department is equipped according to its demonstrable need, scientifically ascertained, and not according to a tradition that is almost prehistoric, his work succeeds, and his salary increases; while it may be that he in his uncomprehending heart fails to pity his unlucky colleague across the hall, whose laboratory hours, because the work may be "done

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at home," have no schedule limit, but may and often do extend from sunrise to midnight, for six and seven days in the week.

Yet the actual needs of a composition teacher, scientifically ascertained, are almost insignificant compared with those of any other laboratory teacher having an equal number of pupils. He needs no special building, and no apparatus save such as should be in the school library and in its lecture-room equipment, but merely time—time to come into direct personal touch with each member of his classes. Since, then, the total available supply of time is even more limited than is the total supply of space available for scientific laboratories, the proper course in English composition as in science is to determine the proper number of pupils for a single teacher, according to the demand that each pupil makes upon that total supply.

If it be assumed that English is of sufficient importance to justify making adequate provision for it, that the opportunity to take it shall be open to all students, and that, in English composition teaching, actual individual practice in speaking and writing is necessary, we must next inquire what sort of practice is desirable, and how much time it takes to get desired results. Here experience must indicate the answer. Its answer is that training must include both oral and written practice in equal proportion; it defines the minimum and the average of written practice necessary, and the corresponding minimum and average of necessary time. It then ascertains the physical and psychological limits of an instructor's strength when engaged in the work, and so determines by a simple computation the maximum and the average number of pupils that he can train effectively within those limits. It then finds that while the time required for effective oral training seems rather greater than for written training, the mental and physical burden of the oral work is commonly less; so that if a teacher should make use of either to the exclusion of the other, his choice would not make a material difference in the number of pupils he should have. Hence to find the right number for one sort of practice is in effect to find it for the other also.

Approaching the problem then from the familiar side of theme writing, and assuming suitable conditions and a minimum require-

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ment in written work, experience shows that the corresponding maximum number of pupils consonant with efficiency for a single teacher in secondary schools should not exceed eighty, and in a college freshman class sixty; and that the proper average number for average needs and conditions as they exist at present is for secondary schools about fifty and for colleges about thirty-five.[1]

Investigation then shows that, under the conditions actually existing, the average number of pupils assigned to a single teacher exceeds the stated maximum by more than 60 per cent, and the stated proper average by more than 160 per cent. That is to say, in the average of all schools under present conditions, composition teachers have from two and a half to three times as many pupils as they should; and this means not only a corresponding depreciation of the value of their output, and a corresponding enormous waste of money, but it is subjecting such teachers, if they make endeavor to prevent such depreciation and waste, to a physical and mental strain that is two and a half times the ascertained limit of endurance. Moreover, investigation indicates further that while teachers of other subjects are often in particular cases weighted beyond the limit of efficiency, and that in some subjects the average is above that limit,[2] the most nerve- and brain-exhausting part of an English teacher's duty, his theme reading, may be from two to five or six times as great as any similar duty of other teachers. Because of this, the average of the total labor devolving upon English composition teachers is apparently between 50 and 100 per cent more than the average total of that of any other class of teachers whatever.

These, in substance, are some of the facts which show good composition teaching to be impossible under present conditions; and the more essential of these facts have received, since the preliminary publication of them a few months ago, corroboration that is apparently more than sufficient to place them beyond the possi-

[1] In complete accordance with these results was the proposition made by the English department and the president of one of the largest colleges in the United States to secure the maximum of efficiency in English composition by making twenty-five students the limit for a single instructor.

[2] See address of Chairman Fossler, *Publications of the Modern Language Association* (March, 1911), pp. lxxiv–xcvi.

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bility of dispute.[1] Yet in time past, when English teachers have stated these facts to educational authorities, they have not infrequently been called incompetent, ignorant, or even untruthful; while more often and perhaps more recently they have been assured that these matters, while possibly true, are after all unimportant and irrelevant; that they have no bearing upon the situation, or that they have nothing to do with the real problems of English teaching.

But investigation shows that there are few schools in the entire country in which these facts are not directly responsible for admitted lack of efficiency. A large proportion of English composition teachers labor under conditions which make their work a farce if not a tragedy. An occasional administrator who does recognize the nature of the situation may assure them that they are not held responsible for more than is "reasonable under the circumstances"; but public opinion and public criticism enter to this statement an effective denial. The public does not know anything about the circumstances, but it does seem to know that it pays for something that for some reason it is not receiving; and the teacher is not usually in a position to escape either the blame or the penalty.

Of course the general averages stated cannot be accepted as defining the conditions of any particular school; it is necessary and also easy for each school to investigate its own conditions for itself. But the school that is so fortunate as not to be subject to criticism for unsatisfactory English teaching or for killing its English teachers, or both, is probably not a school governed by a board or set of officers that, presumably regarding these averages as incompetent, irrelevant, and immaterial, or the making of them as meddling, keep their heads in the sand, and, when requested to make investigation, refuse the request. Many a school officer has given these matters attention, possibly for the first time, within the last few months; some have found conditions more or less satisfactory, some have found otherwise; and the word that these have used more often than any other to designate what they have found is the word "appalling." Of course other things are

[1] See report to the Association of High-School Teachers of English of New York City, October, 1905.

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necessary in teaching besides time; good teachers and right principles and methods also count; but to require the best workman, even with the best tools, to finish an assigned task in one-half or one-third of the necessary time is to spoil the work or the workman or both; that the results should be appalling is inevitable.

If such are some of the present conditions of English composition teaching, what then can be done? Clearly there must first be complete publicity and universal recognition of these elementary and elemental facts. Then public opinion must determine whether to continue these conditions, or to give up the attempt to teach the subject, or to teach it to a limited number only, or to provide adequately for teaching it to everybody. Presumably there is among these but one choice possible.

If in practical business affairs an investment fails to bring desired results, the common practice is to ascertain whether those results will justify an increase of the investment sufficient to insure obtaining them, or whether the business shall be discontinued. This is precisely the nature of the English situation.

In pro rata teaching cost and in equipment cost, English is one of the less expensive subjects in the school curriculum. Because the number of its students exceeds that of any other subject, its total cost is high; but the public seems willing to pay as high and relatively much higher to conserve the interests of a less number of pupils in certain other subjects, because these subjects, it is said, have a bearing upon their industrial and economic future.

Then is or is not training in English expression necessary to a successful industrial and business future? For years the answer to this question has been in theory, without dispute, an affirmative one, yet no effort has been made to determine scientifically the necessary cost; it has perhaps been guessed at, or the English budget has been fixed according to convenience after other things were provided for.

Whatever the cost may be, the decision of public opinion is hardly in doubt. While the minimum change consonant with favorable conditions might increase the cost of English teaching from 60 to 75 per cent, and an immediate and complete change to ideal conditions might double that estimate, the cost of other

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equipment would not increase, and even these high figures are not prohibitive in relation to the cost of other and less essential subjects, and in view of the number of English pupils. Again, this cost can eventually be somewhat reduced by wise management. For, if high efficiency be paid for and established at the beginning of the educational process, that is, in the primary schools, it will, when secured, operate automatically to bring about high efficiency in the secondary schools, even with their present teaching force, because of the improvement in the material furnished them; and indeed it will go far to terminate an unprofitable dispute, and render unnecessary any English composition requirement in colleges. Again, co-operation of all teachers in all departments at all times with the training in English will also operate to reduce the total cost of English, when such co-operation is secured.

Still, as there must always be enough English teachers to teach English, the investment in it must be increased. Or else, if efficiency in English teaching must be given up as unattainable, the only course that is fair to all, however undesirable otherwise, is to make definite announcement of the fact. Let it be known either that instruction in English is provided for a limited number of pupils only and that others must go without; or else that training in English, such as it is, while open to all, is inferior because the schools cannot afford to pay for more than 40 per cent of the instruction necessary to teach it properly, and because it is not fair to ask or expect English instructors to furnish the rest at their own expense; let it be known that, as school boards and officers have been saying privately for years, it is "too bad, but it cannot be helped."

But public opinion, when fully informed, is likely to say something very different; and it seems well worth while to make every possible effort to enlighten it. Hence the extended campaign, explained below, of which this article is a part; a movement not simply to make good composition teaching possible, but to improve the efficiency of all teaching of all subjects by substituting accurate collection of all possible data, and trustworthy inference therefrom, for that ignorant or careless dependence upon tradition and the merest guesswork that still now and then makes itself felt in other educational matters than the teaching of English composition.

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GENERAL NOTE

Moved by common knowledge of the circumstances recited in the preceding article and the failure of various attempts to obtain relief, the English Section of the Central Division of the Modern Language Association in 1909 appointed a committee to gather certain data bearing upon the general situation with a view to general publicity. The committee made a preliminary report in December of 1910, and was instructed to publish the results already arrived at and to request further data for a final report.

Without funds, through various educational agencies, the committee secured publication and distribution of the preliminary report in seven states —Iowa, Illinois, Kansas, Missouri, Mississippi, Michigan, and Wisconsin— to the number of twelve thousand copies, including copies sent out on order, at cost, by the *Graduate Magazine* Press, University of Kansas.[1] Replies received unanimously corroborate every detail of the report, with the qualification that the report is conservative, as it was intended to be—that it understates the seriousness of the matters under consideration.

But the accompanying requests for further information as to cost and labor met with such slight response that the committee found it necessary to follow up the twelve thousand copies with hundreds of personal letters, and with personal requests presented to bodies of teachers at annual gatherings. These supplementary efforts brought better returns, but still limited in number, because the new questions required for full answer the co-operation of school officers and of departments other than English; and this co-operation was very often refused. Meanwhile the general inquiry was indorsed by the National Council of Teachers of English as of the first importance at the present time; and as shown elsewhere in this number of the *Journal*, the Council is aiding the committee to the utmost extent of its resources.

Before this number appears, the results thus far obtained, though not so complete as is desirable, will have been submitted to the Modern Language Association; but there still remains, before publication, an opportunity to make them fully adequate. State educational agencies will be requested to make the gathering of essential data of teaching cost and efficiency a part of their regular duty; but returns from that source cannot be had for at least two years, while a little present help from friends of the movement will make the final report of this committee sufficiently conclusive, and available for immediate and effective use everywhere.

To this end a blank form is inclosed in which general questions give place to a specific tabular statement of points involved. Few will be able to fill this blank completely, and in many cases, for reasons already stated, almost no information can be had. But every detail that can be given, whatever must be omitted, will be of exceptional value, because this part of the investigation is at a stage at which even a comparatively small number of additional replies will establish the practical certitude of the results.

Hence as matter of personal interest and consequence as well as urgency, all readers of this statement are asked to send to the committee upon the inclosed blank with the least possible delay as much of the information there asked for as is obtainable; and if none can be had, to state the fact and the reason—no names of persons or schools to be made public by the committee under any circumstances. The committee has reason to believe that the results of this timely aid at what seems a pivotal moment will pay for the friendly effort a thousand fold, and pay quickly.

[1] Copies may still be had on order; rate, ten dollars a thousand, single copies, five cents, postpaid.

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THE AIM OF THE ENGLISH COURSE

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The methods and content of our course in English ought to depend upon our answer to the fundamental question, What is the aim of this course? Possibly there would be a somewhat general agreement that our aim is, first, to secure power in oral and written expression; second, to develop a discriminating taste for literature; third, to secure some loving acquaintance with the best literature.

Does our course in English as administered at present achieve these ends?

1. Does it secure on the part of our pupils power in oral and written expression? We find an answer to this question in the chorus of complaints from the colleges and the business men to whom our students go at the end of the high-school course. We find, for instance, that Harvard University thinks it necessary to send out to the schools a pamphlet stating the most flagrant errors in English among its Freshmen. Everywhere the answer is the same. The colleges cannot sufficiently condemn our product so far as its training in English is concerned. Business men tell us that our graduates cannot write a decent letter, that they are unable to spell and punctuate acceptably; in short, their anathemas are fully as vigorous as are those of the colleges.

It is altogether possible that both colleges and business men have failed to take into account some elements of the problem, such as our immense numbers and the large proportion of pupils from a home environment of foreign languages and street slang, but in spite of this we must admit that much is to be desired in our results in English composition. When we reflect that in addition to the discipline of the English classes nearly all of the pupils have had Latin and one modern foreign language, the case against our present course is materially strengthened.

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2. Does our present practice develop a discriminating taste for literature? Up to date the answers to this question have been almost entirely empirical. An answer could be secured in the most scientific way if we could ascertain how many of our graduates re-read the literature studied in high school or have enough interest aroused by those books to cause them to read other books by the same author. Until an answer is secured in this way we shall be obliged to depend on mere guesses.

3. The answer to the third question is likewise one which can be given only as a matter of opinion. Some acquaintance with good literature our graduates certainly have; a loving acquaintance at best is probably rare. The writer's opinion that we are failing to develop either a discriminating taste or a love for the best in literature rests largely on an experiment followed for some years as head of a department of English in a high school. The English course was that prescribed by the Regents of New York State, which is practically determined by the Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools of the Middle States and Maryland. For several years the pupils of the graduating classes were asked to write *unsigned* papers, answering somewhat detailed questions on the course. The papers were written with the most emphatic assurance that no individual would ever be held accountable for the views expressed, and indeed that there would not be the slightest effort made to discover who wrote any answer or made any suggestion. The result of this investigation showed clearly that when literature was studied with the minuteness necessary for detailed answers on matters of allusion, structure, comparison, and style, the pupils almost invariably left the book with disgust and with a determination never to touch it again. On the other hand, books that were read less thoroughly for their broader relation to human life aroused great enthusiasm on the part of the students. To be explicit, a play of Shakespeare's studied with constant reference to voluminous notes, with careful analysis of the structure of the plot, with close study of the obsolete words and of all allusions to matters of contemporary history and custom, was so embalmed that the students never wished to look at it again. The same play, handled by a teacher who was herself a splendid reader and who emphasized

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the dramatic interest, was read and re-read voluntarily by the pupils. Many of them testified that without making any particular effort to do so, they found that they had memorized considerable portions of the play, that quotations came to them readily as called forth by occasions in their own lives, and that an interest had been aroused which had led them to read and to attend other plays.

Possibly my own conclusions as to the answers to questions 2 and 3 have been drawn from insufficient data and from temperamental bent. The answers are given with the full consciousness that they are not scientific; they are at least strong evidence that we have not in our courses in English developed either discrimination or love for the best in literature.

Have we aimed at the wrong thing? Whatever may be our theory as to the reason for teaching literature, we have, consciously or unconsciously, taught for knowledge rather than for power. The reason for this is perfectly clear when we consider the history of English teaching in the high schools for the last twenty years. At the beginning of this period the study of English literature meant literary biography, periods of literary history, lists of books, and the characteristics of style of the various authors. Little or nothing of the author's work was really read. In other words, "English Literature" was a knowledge subject. It was considered that a cultured person must know *about* authors.

The study of the English classics was begun on the same theory, which we must admit was somewhat saner when applied to the classic itself than when applied merely to the life of the author. The teachers of literature for the most part had been trained in the ancient classics, and they applied in their teaching of literature the same methods of minute dissection with which they had treated Homer and Virgil. When knowledge of the English classics was made a part of the entrance requirements of colleges, the examination set a pace which could be kept up only by the same careful study. Thus we have dissected the rose only to find that the scent has vanished.

Our training in composition began with long themes, largely reproductions of the classics read. This was natural, as it was only a step from the writing of translations from a foreign language into

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English to the writing of translations of great literature into the poverty-stricken vocabulary of the high-school pupil. If any poison were lacking to complete the destruction of a lurking fondness for our glorious literature, the composition class furnished it. It was not an anaesthetic either. The written theme was a nightmare to the pupil and a night-grind to the teacher. Worst of all it served little use as a training in composition, for it was an effort to do something that the pupil had no desire to do and knew very well he would never have to do except as a school task.

A frank recognition of our fundamental aim in teaching literature will revolutionize our methods. In the first place, our choice of books will be determined, not on the basis of a complete survey of the field of literature, but by the tastes and abilities of the boys and girls at the given stage of their progress. We shall not require them to amble along on Chaucer's palfrey, bored by the Clerk, the Squire, and the Nonne Preeste, when they are at home in the camps of outlaws and the cabins of buccaneers. We shall discard epochs and classifications and seek always the best that will appeal to the interests of the class. We shall conform to the doctrine that education is the process of developing the child from what he is to what he ought to be rather than to our recent practice of leading him from where he isn't to where he doesn't want to go.

On this principle our choice of literature will be much broader than might be supposed, because our method will be so changed that much that has seemed impossible will be found most interesting. For example, we shall read Scott much as we who were not *taught* the English classics read him. The teacher will hasten over the first thirty to sixty pages, get the class fairly absorbed in the story, and then—GET OUT OF THE WAY. She will not assign "the next chapter," she certainly will not take the time of twenty-five recitations to drag under her pedantic arc light every rainbow tint of the story by the "what next" method, she will not exact themes on Rebecca's lacerated affections or Friar Tuck's bibulous lucubrations. She will give Scott a chance, and incidentally her pupils will read about five times as much and like it more than five times as well. By thus directing the tastes the right way, the reading mania, which seems to be a pretty general phenomenon of

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adolescence, may be made to contribute to the literary culture and to the intellectual resourcefulness of later years.

When the attitude of the class toward the school literature is thus revolutionized, the teacher can approach more difficult books with assurance. Literature of varied types can be discovered to the class. More and more of the technical difficulties will be solved because of the intelligent curiosity of the pupils. Thus a four years' course will eventuate not only in a greater knowledge, but also in a discriminating taste that will be rich in its promise of literary culture.

Possibly our progress in teaching composition has been greater than in teaching literature. The disheartening process of challenging comparison between our pupils' feeble efforts and the masterpieces we are violating by an impious and unnatural effort at reproduction is happily becoming less common. We are seeing the problem more clearly and are assigning themes from the daily lives of the pupils, only insisting that in their efforts they make us and their fellows see and hear and feel and think with them. Our standards are not Shakespeare, Macaulay, or Emerson, but Mary Jones, who is the best writer in the class. True, Shakespeare *et al.* must affect the writing of the pupils, but their influence, if it is to be worth anything, must be unconscious.

We are using less red ink, too, to the infinite improvement of our eyesight and our tempers. Some of us saw our laboriously annotated themes cast indifferently into the waste basket, and took the hint; some with "ingrowing consciences" continued to plod our weary way to the waiting midnight lamp and the red ink bottle; some would hurl the rubicund missile at the heretic who questions the divinity of the god of things as they are. Cheer up, sister; soon you can be happy though—a teacher of English.

What shall we do? Let's make our theme assignments as short as possible, teach one thing at a time, hammer on that, have a great deal of work in class, go around while the work is being done as the teacher of science does in the laboratory, on stated days have the class time used as a study period while we give conferences, see as many pupils for conference as we can at off hours and before and after school, have other days for pupils to read their

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themes in class for criticism and comment by pupils and teacher, hold up the best as a model and send the rest home to endeavor to do as well; then use the time we formerly spent in red-inking themes for anything from vaudeville to a Browning club.

It has recently occurred spontaneously to a considerable number of people that live inhabitants of our terraqueous void are apt to talk more than they write—in fact, that everyone talks a good deal every day and that comparatively few write at all. At the same time the "gross materialist," "the time servers," the "almighty-dollar educationists" have suggested that a man's success in life is apt to depend very largely on his address and conversation. By this process we have another of those pestiferous disturbances of the good old days of classico-mathematical "culture"—another "fad and frill," called oral expression. Go to, then. What shall we say to this intruder? Shall we not say: Come in, youngster; you may be another camel's nose in the Tory educational tent, but the practical subjects have the call, and we shall be branded as "stand-patters" if we do not give you a cordial reception? The result will be, I suppose, that we shall have to use some of our valuable time in which we might be increasing the net total of Latin and algebra in the world, drilling on such perfectly uncultural and unacademic attainments as good articulation, distinct enunciation, correct emphasis, inflection, pitch, coloring, tone, etc., in giving expression to literature and to daily speech.

Can we forget tradition and attack our problem *de novo?* Can we agree that the aims of our course are power in oral and written expression, discriminating taste for literature, loving acquaintance with the best literature? Can we test our selection of books and our method of treatment by these ends and these alone? Can we, in other words, study our problem on its merits and apply ordinary business sense to finding the solution?

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THE SCHOOL AND CURRENT FICTION[1]

HERBERT BATES
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The question as I understand it is this: What can the fiction of the day do for our students in the high school? What good can they get from it? What good are they actually getting? What benefits are they missing? And, most important of all, what are we to do about it? What use, in short, are we who educate to make of this potent instrument of education?

By current fiction, I mean two things: first, the stories accessible through current magazines; secondly, novels and collections of short stories available in book form. I shall, however, regard as a current novel any novel that is running at large where the pupil may find it. He knows nothing about its date. All he asks is that it look young. Ulysses asked no questions about the age of Calypso. I will read, in this connection, a boy's list of the books that he has liked: "Barbour's books, Dudley's books, Shakspere's books, Dickens' books, Ellis's books, Castlemon's books." He rises, you observe, above any petty provincialism of time. To him all good books are contemporary.

Current fiction, then, includes all magazines recently issued and all novels that are at present accessible to the ordinary reader. And the first question for us to answer is, What good can a student get from reading these? I feel no hesitation in saying that from the right fiction he may derive almost as much philosophy, quite as much inspiration, as from any other source whatever. From all fiction, except a small residue, he may draw some benefit. In its humblest function, a good story gives rest, recreation, and entertainment. In its highest, it gives an interpretation of life, a sense of the author's answer to the eternal question, "What is worth while?" This philosophy, this sense of the significance of

[1] Read before the New York State Association of Teachers of English, November, 1911.

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life that underlies all the greatest fiction, is as important in its influence upon the shaping of character as the advice of father or mother or the counsel of any preacher. It is often far more important. To measure its influence, we have only to recall how far our own relation to life has been shaped by the novels we have read. Here, then, can we but use it, lies ready to our hand a mighty instrument for good.

I do not mean that at the outset young readers care for fiction of the moralizing type. All fiction, however, even the boy's story of adventure, has its value. Love of stories of adventure is an essential part of boy nature. It is a need that results from the uneventfulness of sheltered lives. The bad man of a western mining town seldom read a dime novel. He didn't need to. If he wanted excitement, he had only to steal a horse or call another man a liar. We, of a modern town or city, missing adventure in real life, seek it in fiction. Of course this may become indulgence, even dissipation. In such a case games and sports may afford an alternative outlet; but they merely reduce the need, and any human boy still calls for stories of action. These stories, however limited their message, seldom fail to teach and even to inspire. The young hero is one who bears pain calmly, who faces danger with resolution, who dares death unflinchingly, who helps the weak and puts down the oppressor. He has not a little in common, after all, with Lancelot and Galahad.

The moral qualities of even the sensational juvenile story—though they may be only the moral qualities of the Red Indian—are still moral qualities. The good qualities of the desperado, the pirate leader, the detective who tracks the criminal may be only a part, a small part of character, but they are at least a part, and are that part which—by Nature's plan—is built first.

Even the adventure story, then, does some good. It can play its part not only in entertainment, but even, within its limits, in developing manhood, and it leads, if we make it so lead, to books that will do far more, that will shape worthy ideals of life and character. So much fiction may do. It remains to see what it is actually doing and to consider what we can do to further its work.

What I shall say about the actual reading of students is based

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upon a number of lists—about two hundred—in which students have set down the novels they have read within the year, and the magazines they read habitually.

Several facts stand out at first sight: Many students read a bewilderingly large number of novels; some students read no novels at all—read no magazines, not even daily papers. Some show a most amazing variety in what they read. To some extent these facts are to be traced to differences in personality and mental endowment. To a greater degree they are traceable to circumstance. Some pupils come from reading homes, others from homes where books are unknown. One has a mother who has read Scott and Dickens aloud to him. Another's mother wants to know, probably in dialect, why he wastes his time on such foolishness. Now the best way to learn to like good literature is to have parents who like it and help one to like it. Failing of this, the best way is to fall under the right teachers. Our problem is how, in the case of the pupils under our charge, we are to fill this parental responsibility. How are we to teach them to like what it is best for them to like? How are we to overcome the force of circumstances?

Our first opportunity lies in the ordinary routine of the classroom—in the teaching of the fiction required in school. We might, by means of these works, train the student to like good novels. Instead we often turn him against them. The fault is in the way we teach.

In the first place we are inclined to analyze and study structure. We go into motives and obstacles and climaxes—as if our object were to develop future novelists and not merely to train future readers. Our second mistake is that we expect a boy or girl reading a story to remember more about it than an interested reader naturally will. When we read for pleasure, we do not read in order to remember. Conversely, when we read in order to remember, we read without pleasure. When I read a magazine story because I like it, I remember certain things—the atmosphere of the whole, the chief action of the story, the behavior and personality of some of the actors. But I feel quite sure that I could not answer correctly the questions that a very precise teacher, who has taught that book for five years, might, with the textbook

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open before her, devise for my confusion. It is easy to see why the student, with the fear of questions ever before him, cannot really enjoy what he reads.

The result of this distaste extends beyond the books studied. For these novels set for reading are put before the boy as samples. They are meant to tempt, to show how alluring good fiction is. The way to make a pupil read Dickens after he leaves school is to make him like the novel of Dickens he reads in school—to make him enjoy it so much that he will, like Oliver Twist, ask for more. You cannot make him like it by cross-questioning him about it and marking his answers. If Romeo had had to pass an examination upon Juliet, he would have fled the sight of her.

The task of luring a wild and untamed young person to like good novels is difficult. You can't say, "Enjoy this or I'll box your ears." You must coax and be diplomatic, and so lead him, bit by bit, into liking what is best for him. We have opened good literature to him only when we have got him to the point where he *seeks it of his own accord.*

Have we accomplished this? Have we done anything in this direction? Out of our class of thirty, ten boys, as a result of home training, come to us liking good fiction. Twenty have no idea how to enjoy a novel of the type we set before them. Do we show these twenty how to enjoy it? Or do we merely see that they read it? How many of these twenty leave us better able to enjoy a good novel than when they come to us? There is the measure of our success.

Here, then, lies part of our task, the part that lies within the range of our everyday teaching. There is, however, another part, the part that lies outside the required reading, the part that concerns us as friends and advisers of the pupils whose future—so far as taste for reading goes—lies largely in our hands.

Let us analyze the problem before us. Our pupils, roughly classified, fall into several groups. First comes the boy who reads no novels. Possibly he merely needs awakening. Possibly the talk of the other boys and their example will arouse him. Frequently, however, he is of the latest type developed by our remarkable civilization, the type that, with the help of certain daily

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papers, is reverting into the mental state of picture-writing savages. With moving pictures and the comic series-pictures of the daily paper, he is ceasing to care about reading. Why bother to construct mental images from descriptions, when he can have real pictures directly before his eyes? If he reads, he reads only headlines, or the inscriptions that explain the antics of A. Mutt or Babbling Bess. Why read the *Tale of Two Cities* or the *Vicar of Wakefield*, when he can sit back and see it all without effort in a moving picture show?

He is our hardest problem—so hard a problem that I feel that when the grammar school has given him up and left him helpless upon our doorsteps, there is little hope for him. The only chance is in getting him to like some of the novels studied in class, or even easier and more attractive ones privately recommended. There must be some little spark of possible interest, and the right book may rouse it.

This class is small—in the high school. The really large class is made up of those who are impatient of more words than will just convey the action. The reader of this class wants juveniles and stories of sensational adventure, of pirates, burglars, and desperadoes. There must be "something doing" in every paragraph. We must show him that he is not really getting what he wants. The books that he likes are not good in their kind. The action is lively, but not real. The characters get no grip. Even the "sanguine credulity of youth" begins at the age of fourteen to have its doubts about Alger's boy heroes. All we need to do is to lead the boy on to something bettter. Show him good stories of action—action that is plausible, that fits the actors, that is presented so that it takes hold of one. Show him such stories as this, and he will forsake Alger and Henty—even Diamond Dick and Nick Carter, to follow where you lead.

As I have said before, athletics or out-door sports will reduce an abnormal appetite for tales of adventure. Of this antidote, every wise school makes use. The boy's appetite, reduced in violence, will have a chance to become more discriminating. Show him good fiction and he will forsake rubbish. A dog that is well fed at home will not eat out of garbage pails. The thing for us

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to do is to compile a list of good stories, stories full of action. Let it be a royal list. Let it contain stories old and new, Doyle, Dumas, Kipling, Morgan, Robertson, Marryat, Clark Russell, Lover, Lever, Bullen, Connolly, Stevenson, Beach, Jules Verne, Sienkiewicz, Jack London—all the men who, with a bit of the boy in them, have told compellingly of deeds on land and sea. It mustn't limit itself to the big men. It must include all who tell their stories well, no matter if there are dozens of teachers of English who have never heard of them. At the right stage, the better juvenile writers—Trowbridge and Brooks, for instance—will serve their purpose.

From these it is easy to lead into literature more serious and more significant. We can lead from Dumas to Victor Hugo, from *Monte Cristo* to *Les Misérables*. It isn't necessary that the boy give up his taste for the story of event—some boys never do till they die of old age. We should merely build upon it a superstructure of more thoughtful reading.

I have said so far little of girls. Some girls, from the point of view of literary training, are like boys. In any event, the case of the girl is analogous. Sometimes, she too likes adventure stories. Perhaps she envies the adventures, perhaps she merely admires the heroism of the man who undergoes them—and wishes she knew a boy like him. Usually she wants a love story. The boy puts up with it as a necessary explanation of "why they fought." To her it may be the center of interest. Both boy and girl demand a happy ending, though he is content to have the story stop when the hero's sword goes through the villain's heart. She wants wedding bells. His lowest depth is Diamond Dick, hers is Laura Jean Libby. As for her possible taste for Marie Corelli and other effusive geniuses, that is merely another symptom of youth. Let it take its course. We are absurdly afraid that our young people will develop a taste for "fine writing." Since our college professors rebuked it in us, we, forgetting that we are not college professors, censure it in these younger people in whom it is perfectly normal. Without it, they would lack what makes youth.

In our present society, the girl of the high-school age gets little wholesome outlet in games. Home life and so-called "social

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life" may, however, furnish a substitute of a sort, and, as in the case of a boy, one can point the way to really good stories—stories of healthy romance and wholesome sentiment. There are the Rebecca books and Emmy Lou and Little Women—there are capital stories of that sort. As to novels of a higher type, there are any number of our American novelists who, lacking in force and depth, excel in charm, in tender sentiment, in just the appeal that will reach her. In fact our average new American novel seems —perhaps is—written especially for the schoolgirl or very young woman. It presents life as she sees it, in golden colors, with an optimism that isn't the optimism of those that have learned hope through adversity. Perhaps that is our loss. It is her gain. Through such books she—as the boy through books of adventure —may work up to novels that look into life through the eyes of manhood and womanhood.

I would note here that in the lists of novels read there was an amazing range of titles. Few students read any one book. This shows me that our school can hardly be doing its duty. The pupils are getting their suggestions for reading from widely different sources. There is little trace of a directed tendency. Their reading results from accident, from environment. Now, their environment should not—as far as we can affect it—be left to accident. Our task is to control it—even to supply it.

There are two dangers that some will mention. One is that the student will waste upon fiction time better spent in reading history or biography. If he neglects these for bad fiction, his case has already been considered. If for good fiction, I admit we have a problem. I regret that it seems to be outside the limitations of this paper.

The other danger is that a student, in random reading, may come upon books that will be of positive harm. Of course there are bad books, but there are not many that a student is liable to meet, and the little bad that gets into good books seldom does any harm. Some people's definition of bad books, however, differs from mine. To me a book is not bad merely if it contains bad words and bad people. I don't—with due regard to the censors of two continents—regard even *Blanco Posnet* or *Mrs. Warren's*

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Profession as "bad books." I should not go out of my way to recommend them to a high-school student, but I should not dissuade him from reading them. To my mind what makes bad books is, as I said, not bad words or bad people, but what Parkman's Indian squaw denounced in the dog she killed for stealing meat—"a bad heart." Such books, if frankly talked over, may be rendered harmless. The young have, besides, a delightful immunity to the poisons that attack their elders. To the immature reader the most immoral book ever written—"*Gulliver's Travels*—that despairing denial of the holy spirit in man—is an innocent story of fascinating adventure.

I feel sure of one thing. It is of no use to forbid a book. If an upper-grade boy insists, like one boy I know, upon reading Zola, Flaubert, and D'Annunzio, it is of no use to look shocked and say "Don't." The only way to do is to talk the books over with him, praising the good and blaming the bad. Teach him to appropriate the one and cast off the other. He must learn to do it. When he leaves school, he won't as a rule enter a monastery. Let him begin, with the novel, the selection that he must practice in the experience of life.

I must say a few things specifically about the reading of stories in magazines. The facts I have gathered are in this respect most encouraging. The magazine most read is the *Saturday Evening Post*. This paper may contain some mediocre stuff, but it contains some real literature. A hundred and thirty-seven out of a little over two hundred reported that they read it regularly. I should suggest, therefore, that stories from it might well be talked over in class, and that the best things in it be used in extension of home reading.

The *Ladies' Home Journal* came second on the list, the *Cosmopolitan* third. The magazines generally read by students are, in short, those generally read by the public, magazines of good quality—not of the highest literary standard, but a long way from the lowest. An important element is that each of them contains a few stories of the highest class. We must remember that some popular writers of today are the classics of tomorrow. The lady in *Cranford* despised Boz as vulgar. Today we try to persuade

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our pupils to read *Pickwick* and to abstain from the latest humorist. Possibly some of us are now trying to coax our students not to read works that in 1950 will be required by the Syllabus.

To return to my main theme: In order to enable our pupils to get the most out of current fiction, we must do several things. First, we must make the fiction that we teach in school so interesting that they will want more. That means that we must like it and *let them see that we do*. Secondly, we must read a good deal of the sort of current fiction that we expect them to read, and even a certain part of what we want them not to read. Thirdly, we must keep before them a list of books that will be good for them. And we must not patronizingly recommend these from above. We must say, "This is a good book. I have enjoyed it and I want you to enjoy it too." And we must let some of the boys tell the class about the books they have read—encouraging them to speak with absolute sincerity. We must work at the level of those we teach. One cannot do slumming by telephone.

We aim to teach our students to share our pleasures. We must then begin by sharing with them those in which our pupils are fitted to share. We must show them what we get out of books. We must help them to find the best books. It is no use forbidding the half-good. We must praise it and lead on from it, up to the wholly good, to the real uplands of literature. These, some of us feel, rise far higher than the highest fiction. Be that as it may, we must see that our pupils get the good that fiction has to offer them. For in this, I repeat, lies the justification of teaching fiction. We are not teaching them to write novels. We are not teaching them to criticize novels. We are not even qualifying them to talk about novels. We are not preparing them to be examined. We are trying to show them how to get a wholesome pleasure out of good stories. We are trying to teach them to see through the eyes of great novelists that the world is interesting to watch, that it is good to live in, and we are trying—this is our topmost endeavor—to teach them to feel, as the greatest of novelists have felt, that human nature is a noble thing, that through all the confused pattern of life there runs a meaning and a mystery. No student, whose novel reading leads him to this, has wasted his time.

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FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF ENGLISH TEACHING[1]

VINCIL CAREY COULTER
State Normal School, Warrensburg, Mo.

The recent organization of a National Council of Teachers of English in accordance with a resolution of the English Round Table of the National Education Association, and the founding of an English Journal devoted to the discussion of the English work of the schools, may be noted as pleasing signs of the times. There seems to be a general feeling that the English course is in a chaotic condition, and that something ought to be done about it. Especially is this true of the upper grammar grades and the high school. Most teachers are dissatisfied with the results of their own work, and those who have charge of the higher classes are sure that the work below them is weak. Even the courses that are, beyond doubt, bringing good results show little uniformity in material or method. What is traditional in the present course belongs to a time when the aim of the schools was to prepare the pupils for college. What is new is frequently but a blind attempt to meet the demands of changed conditions not thoroughly understood. And, in cases where individual schools have worked out effective methods, there has been no adequate means of making the results quickly known to other schools. Any attempt, therefore, to effect a national organization of English teachers, to spread the results of the best thought about methods in English, and to do some constructive work with reference to the English course will surely meet with hearty response.

However, no council of teachers can hope to make useful suggestions for bettering the teaching of English without knowledge of the conditions affecting it at present. No such council could be entirely ignorant of those conditions, but it seems highly desirable, if not altogether indispensable, to have at hand as a

[1] Read before the National Council of Teachers of English, Chicago, December 1, 1911.

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basis for constructive work a large body of data not now available. The facts and conclusions presented by a committee of investigation appointed by the Modern Language Association, of which Professor Edwin M. Hopkins is chairman, are very valuable and need careful attention.[1] In connection with the findings of that committee, it may be interesting to glance at some figures I have collected from the reports of 112 high schools. These figures show the number of pupils per teacher in the various subjects, and have to do with over 650 teachers and nearly 25,000 pupils.

TABLE I

Number of pupils per teacher in science	75
" " " " " " Latin	83
" " " " " " history	107
" " " " " " mathematics	129
" " " " " " English	136

These figures are somewhat inaccurate for mathematics and science. Some of the classes reported in these subjects are half-year classes, and there is duplication of enrolment. The enrolment in the mathematics classes totals several hundred more than the entire enrolment of the schools. But it has been impossible to tell just how many pupils are affected, so I have let the figures stand.

These purely external and physical facts affecting the efficiency of the course cannot be neglected. But, in addition, it is desirable to know the training of the teachers who are to put the course into operation; the equipment of the schools for English—libraries, charts, maps, magazines, lanterns, etc.; and the relative support accorded in various departments. It would be futile to attempt to reconstruct the work in English without taking into consideration the attitude of the executive officers of the schools and the support they may be expected to give. While it is true that the English teachers must be largely responsible for the building of the English course, yet it is equally true that the best English course will result in that school in which the various elements of the curriculum are carefully considered by the executive officer, and each is accorded the support its importance demands. And, if it is thought desirable to ask for added equipment, such request must be based

[1] See p. 1.

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upon a clear statement of the conditions as they are, accompanied by a just evaluation of the various departments.

As stated above, the facts that would seem to be a necessary basis for constructive suggestion are not now available. I have examined the elaborate statistical reports published in several states by the departments of public instruction and, with one exception, it has been impossible to get any of the facts desired. I present the available statistics from a limited number of schools with the hope that it may soon be possible to get similar statistics from a much larger group.

The statistics presented in Table II are from 119 high schools whose pupils are admitted to the Freshman classes of the universities and colleges upon certificates of graduation. These schools range in enrolment from one hundred, sometimes less, to over one thousand. The figures given are for the three departments for

TABLE II

	Chemistry	All Sciences	History	English
Number of pupils enrolled in..	2,148	12,985	15,474	25,066
Value of the equipment for....	$56,747	$204,321	$26,230	$32,100
Value of equipment per pupil..	26.41	15.81	1.69	1.28

Spent per pupil for science equipment in 1910	$1.42
" " " " English " " "	0.17
	Percentage
Of the total enrolment for the three departments, English pupils are	46.8
Of total equipment, that for English is	12.2
Of total enrolment, history pupils are	29.0
Of total equipment, that for history is	10.0
Of total enrolment, science pupils are	24.2
Of total equipment, that for science is	77.8
Of total enrolment, chemistry pupils are	4.0
Of total equipment, that for chemistry is	21.6

which the value of equipment is given—science, history, and English. The value of the equipment for chemistry is given merely because that subject shows the largest expenditure per pupil, as English shows the smallest. It would be interesting in another connection to present a statement of the comparative equipment for the various sciences, ranging as it does from $26.41 per pupil studying chemistry to almost nothing per pupil studying

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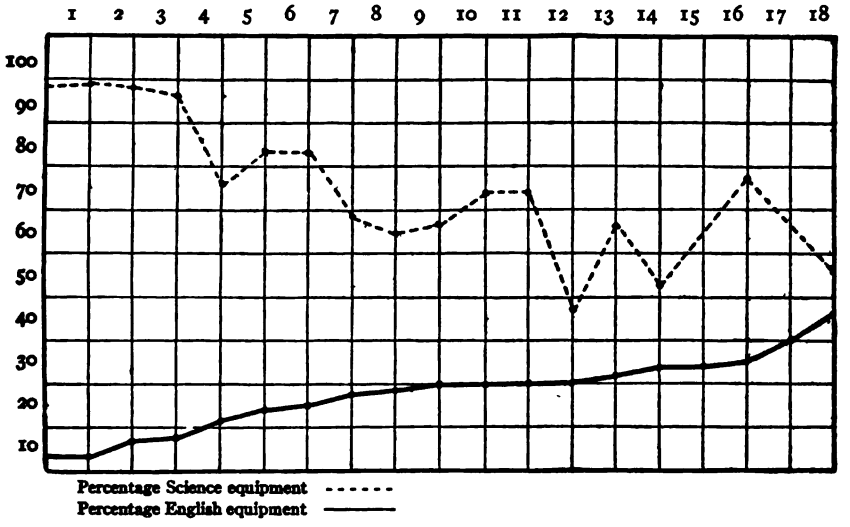
hygiene, personal and civic! But such a statement is not pertinent here and is omitted for the sake of simplicity.

Table II necessarily presents the results in the form of averages. Even more interesting than the averages is the radiation from the mean shown by some of the schools. The accompanying Chart I presents graphically the percentage of the total value of the school equipment, library and laboratory, given to science and to English in a number of small schools selected at random from the list used for Table II.

CHART I.—Percentage of the total equipment given for the teaching of English and of the sciences in eighteen schools chosen at random out of the list used for Table II.



A glance at Table II and Chart I is sufficient to show that the apportionment of funds has not been made on the basis of enrolment in the various departments. Nor do I think it has been made upon any conscious evaluation of their work and needs. It is not my purpose to discuss these relative needs, but merely to say that the present distribution seems unjust. These tables show that the evident inadequacy of the English equipment in many schools is due not so much to lack of funds as to an unjust apportionment. Whether or not my opinion of the relative needs of the departments

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is correct, it would seem impossible to distribute the funds equitably without a knowledge of the facts as they are. And it seems evident that the readjustment of the English course, if readjustment be desirable, must come after these facts are known.

I have said that I do not think that the present distribution of funds is the result of any conscious evaluation of the departments and their needs. The opinion is based, in part, on the very great surprise expressed by many principals and superintendents when their attention has been called to these or similar facts.

There are at least two causes for the present condition which are very interesting. In the first place, in many small schools the superintendents or principals spend part of their time teaching. In 135 such schools, 17 teach English; 15, Latin; 21, history; 46, mathematics; 56, science. In some cases the principal teaches two subjects, usually science and mathematics. These figures indicate that, in a very large number of schools, the positions carrying the largest salaries, the most authority, and, presumably, drawing the best equipped men, are the positions in science and mathematics. It naturally follows that, when there is money to spend, the needs of the science department are uppermost in the minds of the men who are to make the apportionment.

A second cause for the present distribution comes home to the English teachers themselves. Superintendents of town schools frequently say that they do not know English work and that they leave the equipment to their English teachers, who merely put in a request for "books for the library." And it has frequently come under my observation that the two or three hundred dollars appropriated for laboratory equipment has been spent immediately and to good advantage, while the fifty dollars generously set apart for the library has rested like an incubus on the teacher until it has been spent for books which, possibly, have no relation to the needs of the pupils in the classes.

The committee of the Modern Language Association, referred to above, has made conclusive statement of the fact that the present teaching force is not adequate to the efficient training of the pupils now studying English. The inadequacy of the general physical equipment in the form of libraries, exercise material, facilities for

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duplication, lanterns, etc., cannot be shown by statistics or by graphs. It follows that there is great need that some competent and influential body of teachers carefully evaluate the various elements which enter into the work of the English department, show the equipment necessary for the best results, and urge the necessity for getting it. If the aim of the teacher of literature is to make a close study of the chief poems of some of the great poets, he will not demand the same equipment as the teacher whose aim is to present something of the growth of the social, political, religious, and moral ideals of the nation. If the composition teacher merely calls for themes, marks them, and returns them to the pupils for correction, his equipment will be paper and pen. But if his method includes some form of laboratory work, he will require a great deal of exercise material, and means for rapid duplication.

If, after such a study of methods and statement of equipment, it is found that the present provision for English teaching is inadequate, then a statement of the comparative equipment for the various departments of the schools of the entire country, such as I have made for a few schools, will be necessary.

These statistics should be collected through the state departments, or through the high-school inspectors of the various universities. A multiplication of committees sending out questionnaires is to be avoided. Figures from the small percentage of schools which reply are frequently unreliable, and the schools which would make a poor showing do not reply at all. The valuation of the equipment of the schools should be made by men trained for that work, so that uniformity of reports may result. The elaborate statistics published give much valuable information, but they do not give reports in such shape that school administrators may make comparison of the work of the various departments of the high schools. I would suggest that the National Council of Teachers of English appoint a committee to decide upon just what facts are desirable, and that then an effort be made to secure the co-operation of the proper officers in gathering them.

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THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIRST ANNUAL MEETING, CHICAGO, DECEMBER 1 AND 2, 1911

THE INCEPTION OF THE MOVEMENT

The National Council of Teachers of English grew out of the work of a committee of the National Education Association. At the meeting of the English Round Table of the Secondary Department in Boston, July 1, 1910, it was voted that a committee of schoolmen be appointed to lay before the College-Entrance Examination Board the views of the high-school principals and teachers of the country in regard to the present uniform entrance requirements in English and the examinations set upon them. Accordingly, in September of that year, Mr. Edwin L. Miller, the chairman of the Round Table, appointed the following committee: Charles S. Thomas, of Massachusetts; Benjamin A. Heydrick, of New York; Henry B. Dewey, of Washington; Mrs. Henry Hulst, of Michigan; Reuben Post Halleck, of Kentucky; Miss Fannie W. McLean, of California; and James F. Hosic, of the Chicago Teachers College. This committee prepared a folder, directed especially to co-operating committees, who were asked to collect data. In the course of this correspondence it became clear that the English teachers of the country were not well organized—that they had no effective means of working together. Hence, when the Round Table met at San Francisco on July 12, 1911, a resolution was passed, calling upon the Committee on College-Entrance Requirements to take the initiative in forming a national society of teachers of English of a representative and permanent character. In pursuance of this resolution, after consulting the members of his committee and many others, the chairman sent out the following program-bulletin:

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

THE CHICAGO TEACHERS COLLEGE, CHICAGO, ILL.

November 5, 1911

DEAR FELLOW-TEACHER:

The English Round Table of the National Education Association, at its recent meeting in San Francisco, passed a resolution calling upon the Committee on College-Entrance Requirements which was appointed at Boston the year before, to organize a National Council of Teachers of English. The

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intention was to create a *representative* body, which could reflect and render effective the will of the various local associations and of individual teachers, and, by securing concert of action, greatly improve the conditions surrounding English work. In accordance with the resolution mentioned above, a meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English, to be held in Chicago, December 1 and 2, 1911, is hereby called. Four sessions are arranged for, the first to begin at 10:00 o'clock, Friday, December 1, and the last to end at noon on Saturday. The time chosen, it will be noted, is the Thanksgiving recess.

The headquarters of the Council will be the Great Northern Hotel, corner of Jackson Boulevard and Dearborn Street. Reservations should be made at once. See schedule inclosed.

Faithfully yours,

JAMES FLEMING HOSIC,

Chairman of the Committee

PROGRAM

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 1

10 A.M. IN L 38

The Purpose of the Council. The Chairman of the Round Table Committee.

Possibilities of the Work of the Council. PROFESSOR EDWIN LEWIS, Lewis Institute, Chicago, and others.

The Need of Improvement in the Conditions Surrounding the Teaching of Composition. PROFESSOR EDWIN M. HOPKINS, University of Kansas, chairman of a committee of investigation appointed by the Modern Language Association.

Discussion.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 1

1:30 P.M. IN L 38

The English Course in the American High School.

1. A report of progress, by the chairman of the Committee on College-Entrance Requirements, appointed by the English Round Table of the National Education Association.
2. A New England View, by MR. CHARLES S. THOMAS, Newtonville, Mass.
3. A New York View, by a speaker to be announced.
4. Some Impressions of an Itinerant, by MISS EMMA BRECK, Oakland, Cal.
5. A Plan of Organization of High-School English, by MRS. HENRY HULST, Grand Rapids, Mich.
6. Discussion.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 1

6:30 P.M. IN THE CHICAGO ROOM

Banquet. Plates, one dollar and fifty cents.

Address: Possibilities of Co-operation in Teaching, DOCTOR ELLA FLAGG YOUNG, Superintendent of Chicago Schools.

What Problems Should the Council First Attempt to Solve? A series of three-minute talks.

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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2

9 A.M. IN L 38

Business Session. Permanent Organization of the Council.

The Educational Work of the Drama League of America, MRS. A. STARR BEST, President, Evanston, Ill.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COUNCIL

About sixty-five delegates and representative teachers from twelve states responded to the call in person, and letters were received from many more. In all, some twenty states were interested in the movement, including those so remote as Massachusetts, California, North Dakota, and Texas. New York sent delegates from both state and city associations. The spirit throughout was one of intense earnestness.

At the first session, Professor Fred N. Scott, of the University of Michigan, was elected temporary chairman and Professor James F. Hosic, of the Chicago Teachers College, secretary. On motion, the chairman appointed the following committee of nine to prepare a constitution and nominate officers: John M. Clapp, Lake Forest College; Emma J. Breck, Oakland (Cal.) High School; E. H. Kemper McComb, Manual Training High School, Indianapolis; Theodore C. Mitchill, Jamaica High School, New York; Robert W. Neal, Massachusetts Agricultural College; Mrs. Henry Hulst, Grand Rapids (Mich.) High School; James F. Hosic, Chicago Teachers College; Ernest R. Clark, East High School, Rochester, N.Y.; Edwin M. Hopkins, University of Kansas.

This committee met at luncheon, discussed the fundamental principles to be embodied in the plan of organization, namely, representation, permanence, and effectiveness of action, and appointed a subcommittee to embody these ideas in a constitution. This committee consisted of Mr. Clapp, chairman, Miss Breck, Mr. Hosic, and Mr. Mitchill.

After discussion and revision at two sessions of the main committee, the constitution, substantially as printed below, was agreed upon, and persons were selected as nominees for the Board of Directors as required by it. The plan of organization was reported to the general meeting on Saturday morning and, with slight amendment, was adopted (see below). The following were elected members of the Board of Directors, and proceeded to cast lots to determine who should hold office for one, two, and three years respectively:

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR ONE YEAR

John M. Clapp, professor of English, Lake Forest College, Lake Forest, Ill.; Ernest R. Clark, head of the Department of English, East

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High School, Rochester, N.Y.; Cornelia Steketee Hulst, head of the Department of English, High School, Grand Rapids, Mich.; Samuel A. Lynch, head of the Department of English, Iowa State Teachers College, Cedar Falls, Ia.; Grace Darling, chairman of the Department of English, Bowen High School, Chicago, Ill.; Edwin L. Miller, assistant principal, Central High School, Detroit, Mich.; Edwin M. Hopkins, professor of rhetoric and English language, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kan.; Emma J. Breck, head of the Department of English, Oakland High School, Oakland, Cal.; Roger H. Motten, professor of English, Colorado College, Colorado Springs, Colo.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR TWO YEARS

Harry K. Bassett, assistant professor of English, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis.; E. H. Kemper McComb, head of the Department of English, Manual Training High School, Indianapolis, Ind.; Lemuel A. Pittenger, critic teacher, School of Education, University of Indiana, Bloomington, Ind.; Elizabeth Graeme Barbour, head of the Department of English, Girls' High School, Louisville, Ky.; Vernon P. Squires, professor of English, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, N.D.; Ellen F. P. Peake, Department of Literature, State Normal School, Oshkosh, Wis.; Joseph Milnor Dorey, head of the Department of English, High School, Trenton, N.J.; Fred Newton Scott, professor of rhetoric, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich.; James M. Powers, superintendent of schools, Salem, Ore.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THREE YEARS

Robert W. Neal, head of the Department of English, Massachusetts Agricultural College, Amherst, Mass.; Chester Noyes Greenough, assistant professor of English, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.; Walter J. Hunting, superintendent of schools, Carson City, Nev.; John H. Cox, professor of English, University of West Virginia, Morgantown, W.Va.; James Fleming Hosic, head of the Department of English, Chicago Teachers College, Chicago, Ill.; Theodore C. Mitchill, principal of the Jamaica High School, Jamaica, N.Y.; Vincil Carey Coulter, head of the Department of English, State Normal School, Warrensburg, Mo.; Nathan Wilson Walker, professor of education in the University of North Carolina and state inspector of high schools, Chapel Hill, N.C.; George B. Aiton, state inspector of high schools, Minneapolis, Minn.

A recess was then taken, during which those present signed the constitution as charter members. Several of the largest associations of English teachers in the various states and large cities were provisionally enrolled by their representatives.

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The Council was then called to order and the following officers were announced as elected for the ensuing year by the Board of Directors, in accordance with the constitution: President, Professor Scott; First Vice-President, Miss Breck; Second Vice-President, Mr. Mitchill; Secretary, Professor Hosic; Treasurer, Professor Bassett; Members of the Executive Committee, for one year, Miss Darling; for two years, Mr. Pittenger; for three years, Professor Hopkins.

Constitution of the National Council of Teachers of English

I. NAME

This organization shall be known as the National Council of Teachers of English.

II. OBJECT

The object of the Council shall be to increase the effectiveness of school and college work in English.

III. OFFICERS AND MANAGEMENT

The management of the affairs of the Council shall be vested in a Board of Directors, not to exceed thirty in number, and in the officers chosen by the Board of Directors. At least one-half of the Board of Directors shall be delegates from associations of teachers of English.

The Directors shall be elected by the Council for a term of three years, *provided*, that at the first election one-third shall be chosen for one year, one-third for two years, and one-third for three years, and, *provided further*, that not more than three Directors shall be from the same state.

The Directors shall choose annually from their own number a President, two Vice-Presidents, a Secretary, and a Treasurer, who shall serve in these capacities, in both the Council and the Board. Except in so far as the Council may by vote limit its powers, the Board of Directors shall have full authority to manage the business and the properties of the Council, to fill vacancies in offices and committees, to make all necessary arrangements for meetings and for procuring of speakers, and to appropriate funds from the net balance in the treasury in payment for any services, rents, publications, or other expenses properly incurred in carrying out the work of the Council. But neither the Council nor any officer or committee shall contract any indebtedness exceeding the net balance then remaining in the treasury. Requisitions must be signed by the Secretary and the Chairman of the Executive Committee.

Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be called by the Secretary at the direction of the President or at the request of three members of the Board. Seven members of the Board shall constitute a quorum.

The Board of Directors shall appoint from their own number, for a term of three years each, three members, who, with the President and the Secretary,

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shall constitute the Executive Committee. This committee shall direct the work of the Council under the general policy determined by the Board of Directors. The terms of the three members chosen shall be so arranged that one new appointment shall be made each year. Three members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum.

IV. MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

The annual meeting of the Council shall be held at such place and time as the Executive Committee shall designate. Special meetings may be called at any time by the Executive Committee, or by petition, filed with the Secretary, of 10 per cent of the membership of the Council.

V. MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Council shall be of three kinds: individual, collective, and associate. The individual membership shall consist of teachers and supervisors of teaching in active service; the collective membership, of associations of English teachers, each of such associations being entitled to one delegate for each one hundred members or fraction thereof; the associate membership, of persons other than teachers and supervisors, who wish to be identified with the work of the Council. Only individual members and delegates of associations shall have the right to vote and to hold office.

Candidates for membership shall be passed upon by a Membership Committee of three, appointed by the Executive Committee. A unanimous vote of the Membership Commitee shall be necessary for the election of a candidate.

The annual dues of the individual and associate membership shall be two dollars, payable in advance at the beginning of the fiscal year. The annual dues for associations of English teachers shall be ten dollars. All members shall be entitled to receive the publications of the Council without extra charge.

The fiscal year shall begin November first.

VI. RESIGNATIONS

Resignations must be made in writing and sent to the Secretary of the Council not later than January first in any fiscal year.

Members whose dues are not paid for the current fiscal year and who do not send in a written resignation by or before January first, *provided*, that two notices, at least, that the dues are payable have been mailed to such members, shall be dropped from the Council.

VII. AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any regular meeting of the Council, *provided*, that at least one month's notice be given to each member of the nature of any proposed amendment or addition, such notice to be sent upon the order of the Executive Committee.

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RESOLUTIONS

A number of resolutions were offered and disposed of as follows:

Resolved, That the National Council of Teachers of English indorses the work of the Committee on Composition of the English Section of the Central Division of the Modern Language Association. We commend the report of this committee to the attention of every English teacher and of every school officer; and we request the co-operation of educational organizations, institutions, state officers, and the press in securing the utmost publicity for the report.

Proposed by Professor Hopkins and adopted.

The Council directed the Executive Committee to request state officers, including high-school inspectors, to furnish data with reference to the comparative cost of equipment and instruction for the various departments of the high schools; also to call the attention of the United States Department of Education and of the Carnegie Commission to the report of the Committee on Composition, with reference to possible publication.

Resolved, That the Executive Committee of the National Council of Teachers of English be directed to request the proper officers of the organizations represented in the National Conference on Uniform Entrance Requirements to include in their several delegations an adequate number of representatives from the public high schools.

Proposed by Mr. Mitchill and adopted.

Mr. Clark then offered the resolutions adopted by the New York State Association of English teachers at its meeting in Teachers College, December, 1909. These were as follows:

I. This Association affirms its conviction that any requirements for college or for the granting of the Regents Academic Diploma should be such as to lead to the best preparation for graduation from high school.

II. The requirement in English for graduation from high school, for entrance to college, and for the Academic Diploma should consist of the following tests:

1. A test of the pupil's power of written expression by one or more compositions on subjects suggested by the personal experience or the general information of the candidate.
2. A test of the range and quality of the reading of the pupil and of his power of literary appreciation by means of:
   a) The answering of a number of simple and suggestive questions on standard texts not previously prescribed.
   b) The explanation of two out of three or four passages of prose or poetry of ordinary difficulty, selected from books not to be previously prescribed.

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3. A test of the candidate's power of oral expression by reading aloud and conversing.

Animated discussion followed. The Council clearly was opposed to going on record as seeming to approve the Eastern examination system, and urged Mr. Clark to come squarely out for certification. It was freely granted, however, that such a test as the one proposed was practical and might have a good influence, particularly with regard to oral expression. The matter was finally referred to the Board of Directors for action, with the understanding that the Council must not be made to appear favorable to an examination system of entrance to college.[1]

After making an assessment to pay the expenses of the meeting, the society adjourned.

PAPERS AND DISCUSSIONS

The principal papers read before the Council appear in full in this and the succeeding number of the *Journal*. Summaries of the discussions are here grouped under the several topics.

Possibilities of the Work of the Council

Professor Lewis, Lewis Institute, Chicago, Ill.: The speaker before me has wisely refrained from proposing the discussion of our probabilities, and in his outline of ends and aims has covered the field of our possibilities. But possibilities are divisible into more remote and less remote. Of the second class I shall name three.

It is quite possible for this organization to forward the cause of a uniform nomenclature for grammar. It is not necessary for our school grammars to carry a mass of unscientific, factitious, make-believe phraseology, the residue of an obsolete psychology.

It is quite possible for us to focus attention upon the vague subject called English, till we know what part of it is examinable. We can establish reasonable standards of promotion. For one, I think that these should be standards of power in writing and speaking English. We should promote the student according to his progress in the command of a sound plain prose style. If we could once agree upon this principle,

[1] The following revision of the resolutions has been proposed:

Resolved: (1) That the Council draw the attention of examiners in English to the protest of the New York State Association of English Teachers, adopted at its meeting of December, 1909, and embodied in a pamphlet entitled "An Open Letter to Teachers of English"; (2) That it is the sense of the Council that if examinations in English for admission to college are to be held at all, the tests suggested in this circular will obviate many of the present evils; (3) That the ends desired by the New York State Association can be attained most simply and directly by the general adoption of a system of certification.

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we should then be able to place the study of literature upon a higher basis, somewhat apart. We could make literary study a joy, a progress into the life of ideals and the imagination. It is easy to make students hate literature by treating imponderables as if they were quantitatively determinable.

It is quite possible that this Council should diminish insularity and promote good feeling among the teachers of English in America. It ought to make impossible such passages at arms as that which recently occurred between Professors Lounsbury and Bates in the New York *Nation*. To take these gentlemen seriously would be to believe that English cannot be taught, whereas the fine results obtained by both these men prove the contrary. The work of the Council will be worth while if it does no more than eliminate such letters from the columns of the *Nation*.

PROFESSOR CLAPP, Lake Forest College: There has been too little class-consciousness among teachers of English. Wherever I have met English teachers, in high school and college alike, it has seemed that each one is working alone, with relatively little knowledge of what others are doing. High-school teachers of English have at present one rather unfortunate bond of union in that they all have to teach the same college-entrance books, but they do not know much of one another's methods or results. College teachers have even less knowledge of one another's methods than do the high-school teachers. While individuality is most desirable in education, our present isolation is both wasteful and injurious. We should all be benefited by having a strong and widely extended organization of our own, which would keep us all informed of progress in any part of the country, and to which we might bring problems which are too large to be settled by any one teacher or by the teachers in any one neighborhood. There are problems of organization, of methods, and of principles and aims, with regard to which we have all been drifting. A national organization would help toward settling some of them.

Such an organization could do much toward giving publicity to the report of Professor Hopkins' Committee from the Modern Language Association regarding English composition teaching—the amount of work which should be required of the teacher and the rate of pay. The investigation begun by this committee is the most important development of the last twenty years for teachers of English and for their classes. It ought to be brought to the attention of school officials and school

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boards throughout the country. A national organization of English teachers could do more for this result than any other agency.

Such an organization should consider the far-reaching questions of oral English. The time of utter neglect of oral work by English classes is passing. Beginnings are being made here and there toward developing oral work—notably by the State Association of Teachers of English in Illinois, during the past year. But there are problems of the relationship of oral work to the work in writing and in literature which ought to be worked out by a national body.

There is the tremendous question of the general purpose of the courses in English—"Culture" or "Efficiency." At present many teachers are trying for both these desirable objects in every class and failing, pretty obviously, to secure either. I believe that we must find a way to do our work so as to achieve both objects. We are not going to be relieved of the burden of teaching the boys and girls to speak and write correctly and effectively; in the opinion of the general public that is what we are hired for. Nor can we avoid the duty—and the delight—of developing in the young people a sense of the significance and the beauty of literature. The English teacher, or the English department, in every school must continue to be responsible for both these matters. And to find the way will take all the wisdom that all of us possess. A national organization, particularly if it can have some sort of periodical to publish its proceedings, is practically a necessity today. It will develop for us, in time, a national standard of what is desirable and what is practicable in both aims and methods, of which we have been sadly in need.

Mr. Ernest R. Clark, East High School, Rochester, N.Y.: We are facing big problems. The economic waste in our failing to do what we ought to do in the matter of English is enormous. This Council, composed as it is of representatives, has a large opportunity. Teachers should unite in presenting their problems to school authorities. The present system of examining candidates for entrance to college has a very bad influence. Pupils should be examined for power, to determine their ability to speak, to read, and to write. The Council might well formulate a plan for such an examination.

The Council should be composed of three departments, viz., elementary, high school, and college, and the representatives in each department should be actual workers in that particular field. A primary teacher would not be a suitable representative of the college section and the reverse would be equally grotesque.

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English in the elementary schools is the greatest problem in American education today. It extends over a period of eight years, while the high school and college have four years each. It applies to 100 per cent of all the children, while high-school English applies to less than 15 per cent of them and the college to less than 3 per cent. It occupies from 35 per cent to 57 per cent of the time on the daily program, while the high school and college always have less than 25 per cent of the total time.

The subject is in the most chaotic condition conceivable. There is no agreement among principals of elementary schools as to subject-matter, form or kind of work, method, or anything else. The best teachers are utterly at sea. They do all sorts of things in the name of English.

The teaching of English in colleges and in high schools has improved in the last twenty years. The study of the problem began in the college and was forced upon the high school, and these two departments are giving the subject careful consideration. But this is a backing-up process; the correct study of the problem begins with the child and moves forward through the grades, the high school, and the college and adjusts itself to the normal child at all points.

Miss Flora E. Hill, State Normal School, Marquette, Mich.: I should like to call the attention of the Council to the condition of English teaching in the small high schools. It is quite a common practice of the superintendents to engage specialists to teach the languages, the sciences, and mathematics, but to distribute the English classes among all such teachers as have one or two hours over what are required for their special subject. In most cases none of these teachers has ever had any special preparation for English teaching. They frequently have no liking for it, and most give to it only the time for which they can find nothing else. They probably do the best they can, and this is done, of course, by recalling what they can of how their teachers taught the subject.

As a teacher of English in a normal school, I have had two students, graduates in the same class from the same school, one of whom had had a fairly good preparation in both composition and literature, and the other of whom had written only three or four compositions in a four years' course in English. "It all depends," they say, "upon the teacher you have."

Anyone who has stopped to think about it, knows that the assignment of themes, the correction of them, and the real teaching of literature require a person trained in these departments of thought. The Council should urge that specially trained teachers only should be allowed to hold the positions in which English is taught.

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PRESIDENT WILLIAM BISHOP OWEN, of the Chicago Teachers College, pointed out that the English teacher can do more than any other to instruct young people in the humanities. Mr. Owen's remarks will be embodied in an article on the "Educational Opportunity of High-School English" to appear in a future number of the *Journal*.

THE NEED OF IMPROVEMENT IN THE CONDITIONS SURROUNDING THE TEACHING OF COMPOSITION

PROFESSOR EDWIN M. HOPKINS presented a printed report of the investigations of his committee. He explained that a letter from a teacher who had broken down under the strain of composition work had induced him to take up the task of gathering data and securing publicity. Twelve thousand copies of the report have already been distributed in seven states. Two new questions have come up. The first is, How does the burden of the composition teacher compare with those of other teachers? and, second, How does the cost of instruction in English compare with that of other subjects? It seems certain that at least one-half more money should be spent upon composition work in order to prevent the large waste now common.

Mr. Hopkins has prepared an article on his investigation especially for the *Journal* (see p. 1).

MR. EDWIN L. MILLER, assistant principal of the Central High School, Detroit, Mich.: This report of Professor Hopkins is a fine piece of work finely done. It is the most hopeful thing that has been in the field of English teaching in America for some years. Ever since I began to teach English, eighteen or twenty years ago, I have heard English teachers abused because they did not get satisfactory results. Most of these criticisms came from young college professors and from old business men, and as I, at that time, had great respect for both classes, I thought probably that our failure was due to our stupidity. I have come in late years to a different conclusion, and Professor Hopkins' report has made that conclusion, which before was only a theory, into a conviction. The truth appears to me to be that when we undertake to teach English we are undertaking to teach at least two subjects and possibly more. The first of these subjects is the expression of our own ideas in writing or orally. The second is the interpretation of other people's ideas, the bare understanding of them. If we went no farther than this in the study of literature, the English teachers, as the course is now organized, would have to do twice as much work as is laid out for any other department, but, aside from this, there is the whole content of literature in its higher

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and subtler aspects to be taken into consideration. Literature is a great mirror of life. It includes history, science, philosophy, religion, and, in teaching it, we are face to face with a problem as broad as life itself. Professor Hopkins shows us conclusively, I think, how big this problem is. He shows us how hopeless it is to struggle with it in the face of existing conditions. I have tested these results in the light of my own experience, and I find that they are perfectly sound.

I do not think, however, as has been said here this morning, that it is fair to say that the work done by the devoted army of English teachers throughout the country has all been thrown away. I resent any such insinuation. It has not been thrown away. A good deal of it has been uneconomical, I admit. This has been due largely to the fact that composition, grammar, and reading have been inextricably mixed. An important economy in effort and an important gain in efficiency would be secured if the courses in reading and the courses in composition were separated, as we have separated them in Detroit. This new arrangement has now been in operation with us for two years, and the result has been entirely satisfactory. I do not believe that anything could induce our teachers to go back to the old scrambled-eggs course.

The fact, however, remains that Professor Hopkins' committee has discovered the only real remedy for the disease. Let me repeat that his report is the most hopeful thing that has been in the field of English teaching since English came to be recognized as a regular subject in the high schools of this country.

PROFESSOR HARRY K. BASSETT, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis.: We must get the report to the people who are responsible, to the school officers. The men who hold the purse strings should know the actual conditions. The English Association of Wisconsin is about to publish the report in that state. The same should be done everywhere.

PROFESSOR COULTER'S paper, with which the discussion of the topic closed, appears elsewhere in these pages.

THE ENGLISH COURSE IN THE AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL

The papers by Mr. Thomas, Miss Breck, and Mrs. Hulst are reserved for publication in the February number of the *Journal*, together with a summary of the final report of the Committee on College-Entrance Requirements of the English Round Table of the National Education Association.

In reporting the progress of the National Education Association committee, Mr. Hosic called to mind the fact that the high school has

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been for some time a center of agitation. He related the history of the committee, explained its plan of work, and read a number of letters from English teachers and others to show the trend of opinion as to the influence of the Uniform Entrance Requirements in English and the examinations set upon them. On the whole, the verdict seems decidedly unfavorable. But the present situation is hopeful. All are reasonably willing to co-operate in bringing about healthier conditions. By the method of experiment and comparison of results we must learn how to instruct adolescents in the mother-tongue.

MR. CLARK, of Rochester, N.Y., deplored the grinding-in of mere facts, so often observed in the English classes of the small high schools. He would have no entrance examinations on books previously prescribed.

MR. THEODORE C. MITCHILL, Jamaica High School, New York, N.Y.: The Uniform Conference on Entrance Requirements in English at the time of the last meeting was composed of thirteen college men, two representatives of academies, and one principal of a public high school. The results shake one's faith in the ability of college men to determine wisely the high-school course. What recognition, for example, do the examinations provide for the dramatic instinct? How do they bear upon the problem of current fiction?

The center of the English course should be composition rather than literature. Books should illumine the thoughts and aspirations of the pupils. They may do so when we get rid of the prescribed lists. This is the first step, in the East at any rate. The course must be reorganized from the point of view of the pupil. This will be a large and difficult task, involving, among other things, provision for training in oral expression.

The Council should boldly take the side of the school. The college men look out from their cloisters to view the student approaching their gates, but from our point of view the college is only a beauty spot in the landscape.

THE CHAIRMAN: The totem pole is already partly cut through and tottering to its fall. It is reported that even the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge in England are about to adopt a certificate system of entrance.

MISS EMMA BRECK, Oakland, Cal.: A visitor to the East is impressed with the inadequacy of the present course in English to meet the demands of varying conditions. Yet many teachers seem to be without hope of change. Departure from college-entrance requirements is usually made, if at all, in secret.

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We must have a true pedagogy of English teaching and a course based upon principles, not a mere list of books. By studying the pupils and the reactions which certain books and conditions induce, we shall eventually arrive at a true basis. We must approach the problem with seriousness and expert knowledge.

MR. E. H. KEMPER MCCOMB, Indianapolis, Ind.: No attempt should be made to establish a detailed course for the schools of the country. We must agree upon a few fundamentals. With the immense increase in the number of high-school pupils has come the necessity of providing instruction suited to children who come from poor environment. One boy who was asked to read *Ivanhoe*, remarked that he could not understand why a man should ride around on a horse all day. He preferred Harold McGrath. But another boy declared, "Character is the thing." We must provide for all sorts of boys. Moreover, some of our pupils will never read anything but the newspaper, and books on their occupations. It is useless to try to make all literary. The colleges must recognize this.

We must study the problem of adolescence. For example, a project involving teamwork will enlist all. Hence, appoint committees to do certain tasks. The love of the heroic, so marked at this time, should be satisfied with modern as well as ancient heroes. Why not F. Hopkinson Smith's Captain Scott as well as Homer's Ulysses?

The high school must articulate better with the elementary school and avoid overambitious methods. College graduates very often prove poor teachers because not adaptable. In exposition one class found a really well-written account of "How Cobb Stole Home" an acceptable model.

The burden of work may be lessened by co-operation with other teachers. By employing oral composition, having fewer themes and more self-criticism, the composition problem is largely solved. The literature work may well be called merely reading. Let us seek to put the children a little farther on, not to carry out some prescribed course.

MR. ROBERT W. NEAL, Amherst, Mass.: The Agricultural College is striving to employ common-sense methods in examining candidates for entrance. Boys are asked to tell how some familiar tool or machine is made. The tendency is away from books to more natural tests.

MISS ELVIRA D. CABELL, Chicago Teachers College, Chicago, Ill.: The optimism of the meeting is inspiring. The task before us is hard, but results are coming. Mankind is divided into ancient, mediaeval, and modern periods. Children are Moderns, but many of us are approaching the Mediaeval. We must get really into the situation with the children.

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PROFESSOR SQUIRES, University of North Dakota: I belong to that much-criticized class, the college professors of English, and certainly feel very humble in this presence. However, if I may be permitted, I should like to say a few words in behalf of the much-abused Uniform Entrance Requirements. They had at least one merit: they gave a certain unity and system to the English work. In my part of the country the teaching of English is largely in the hands of young women with but little experience. To throw upon each of these the entire responsibility of outlining and developing a high-school course would certainly be a great mistake. The high-school teachers gathered here could no doubt arrange courses highly satisfactory; but thousands of young teachers all about the country would find the task too great. This Council will certainly miss a great opportunity if it does not make quite definite suggestions for an improved high-school course, which, while allowing reasonable liberty, shall, at the same time, have something of the directive value of the courses hitherto suggested by our friends of the various uniform-entrance boards.

In my judgment, too, it would be a mistake to confine the reading to books in regard to aspects of life with which the pupil is already familiar. The cultivation of the imagination, the leading of the mind and spirit out of itself, is one of the great objects of our work. Something certainly is radically wrong when a healthy boy cannot be interested in *Ivanhoe*.

MR. W. F. MOZIER, principal of the Ottawa Township High School, Ottawa, Ill.: When a boy I read *Les Misérables* out on the woodshed under a willow tree. Literature work would be more effective if it were carried on as a sort of club. Perhaps in that case a boy would not declare against Stevenson because he had read *Treasure Island* in school.

Let us not lay too much stress upon literary composition. Born authors will find themselves; the remainder need to know how to use English as the world uses it today.

PROFESSOR A. B. NOBLE, Iowa State College: Many fail to attain a reasonable standard in English upon graduation from high school. At Iowa State College 50 per cent have been obliged to take an extra hour in their first year. But the tests should be for power.

Both classical and modern literature should be studied. The *Atlantic Monthly* and the *Outlook* may well be used in college English. The problem is in part ethical, and hence the material should reflect life broadly. It is possible for the English teacher to get into closer touch with the pupils than any other.

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EDITORIAL

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ORGANIZATION OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL

The organization of another society of teachers will seem to many, on first thought, quite indefensible. There are, as everybody knows, a multitude of such associations already; many of these, moreover, are composed wholly or in part of teachers of English. The fact remains, nevertheless, that there are numerous unsolved problems of English teaching; witness the discontent. Nor does it seem likely that the existing organizations will ever solve them.

In the first place, most of the associations of English teachers are local. Excellent as they are, such groups as the New England Association of Teachers of English and similar societies in New York, Indiana, Michigan, and Illinois are necessarily limited in scope and are unable to co-ordinate and unite the teachers of the country as a whole. There are other groups which draw from larger territories, but they are not truly representative. This is the case with the National Conference on Uniform Entrance Requirements in English. Most of the members are professors in the eastern colleges. This group, moreover, is necessarily restricted in its interests, inasmuch as it was brought together for the single purpose of securing uniformity in the college-entrance requirements in English. The Modern Language Association of America includes English in its subjects of discussion; but the point of view is that of the scholar engaged in research rather than that of the teacher, and the members come almost entirely from the higher institutions. As for the English Round Table of the National Education Association, it is a shifting and uncertain body. Only a section of the high-school department at best, without a permanent organization or assurance of continuity of effort, its results must of necessity be sporadic and generally unsatisfactory. If now and then it does aggressive service, it is in spite of rather than because of its character.

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There is a place, then, for the National Council of Teachers of English. Without duplicating the work of any society now in the field, it may seek to supplement and co-ordinate all. Its members are drawn from the elementary schools, the high schools, the normal schools, the colleges, and the universities, and they represent territories as widely separated as Massachusetts and California. Several of the most effective of the local associations of English teachers are already affiliated with it, and are thus in a position to join forces for the common good. The ready response with which the venture has met is reassuring. Apparently the time was ripe.

The movement is distinctly spirited, optimistic, and progressive. In the addresses and resolutions of the initial meeting, the feeling of desire and determination to secure greater effectiveness and better conditions in which to work is unmistakable. Yet it is evident that the Council will move with caution, aware of the difficulty of the tasks which lie before, and resolved to proceed by means of careful investigation and methodical analysis of results rather than by mere impulse. The emphasis so strongly placed upon the necessity of adapting the work of the school to the needs and capacity of the pupils is significant. It means that practical and cultural, and not merely academic, ideals are to control, and that we shall hear less about "preparing" students for this or the other institution of learning farther on and more about what pupils can, or cannot, do here and now.

Certain opportunities the Council has found ready to its hand. The most important of these is that of coming to the support of the Composition Committee of the Modern Language Association in its most valuable work. That teachers of written English are overburdened and sadly handicapped has been more or less keenly realized for years, but just how badly they are burdened, how seriously prevented from securing results, it remained for Professor Hopkins and his associates to demonstrate. If the Council can assist in securing and publishing the facts, and also in bringing about healthier conditions and the use of methods less wearing though equally effective, it will on this account alone amply justify its existence.

In this and similar good works the *Journal* hopes to have a

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useful part. As the medium through which the Council reaches the public, it has a definite place and mission. Besides this it aspires to provide a means of expression and a general clearing-house of experience and opinion for the English teachers of the country, whether members of some organization or working alone. If not a household name, the *Journal* would be at least a welcome visitor and a bearer of helpful messages to all who are interested in the teaching of the mother-tongue.

SHALL "LABORATORY WORK" IN COMPOSITION BE GIVEN UP?

Some noteworthy recent utterances in print and otherwise indicate a willingness on the part of a few teachers and administrators not simply to admit failure in English composition teaching, but to proclaim that the matter is hopeless, and that there is nothing to do but return to the old order and let students teach themselves to write and speak English with merely casual assistance. The old order made great artists in literature, they say; the new one does not accomplish anything. Underneath all of which may be discerned the following assumptions:

That the chief end of English composition teaching is to make artists in literature.

That a plan which does not produce a number of great artists in twenty years or so is therefore useless.

That a plan that has never had a fair trial and is not really in operation can be, if results are not satisfactory, adjudged a failure.

Somehow these are not as convincing as they might be. Why not give laboratory principles an adequate test, somewhere, for a sufficient time, to determine whether or not students can be trained to do certain definite things according to the standard of established present usage? The question is for the public to answer, not the teacher or administrator. Something of the sort is done every day in newspaper offices—and, by the way, what would happen in a newspaper office if the one managing editor were suddenly saddled with from a hundred to a hundred and fifty cub reporters to break in all at once?

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THE ROUND TABLE

This department is intended to provide opportunity for brief discussion and comment upon live topics. Most of the contributions in this number are from the meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English, Chicago, December 1, 1911. The general topic was, "What Problems Should the Council First Attempt to Solve?"

FOUR PROBLEMS FOR THE COUNCIL

I am glad that the question puts the word *problems* in the plural, for the Council is certainly large enough in membership to do more than one thing at a time, and it seems to me that four things need early attention. First are the two discussed today: We may well aid the eastern teachers to secure needed revision of college-entrance requirements, if they will join with us to secure an adequate number of persons for teaching English composition.

Then, third, I believe that it is time to put an end to the idle and meaningless dispute between advocates of culture-training and of practical training, by substituting thinking for memorizing in all training. For the student to think about literature and apply the results of his thinking is to make literature study practical without making it less cultural; for him to think while studying English composition is to bring to expression his own best self. To do this is one of the highest ideals of culture, and the results might sometimes happen, under right conditions, to become literature.

Fourth, I believe that we can also put an end to what is perhaps the gravest waste of time in any school subject, by teaching grammar, not separately with independent textbooks, but incidentally in connection with all English training; in composition as a part of the mechanism of expression, and in literature as a part of the means of interpretation. Grammar by itself is lifeless, and the study of it bears pitifully small fruit; grammar with composition is vital; and the phenomena of linguistics—meaning, form, sound—illustrated in reading of classics, give new meaning to the classics while they arouse the keenest interest in themselves. No "special text" is needed to make this sort of training effective.

EDWIN M. HOPKINS

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS

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MORE SIMPLE AND DEFINITE STANDARDS

I am greatly interested in this matter of teaching English in the public schools, and especially in the high schools. I hope that the Council may see fit to look at the matter from the standpoint of the needs of the students, regardless of any requirements that may be laid down by the colleges and universities. The English work in the high schools is at present largely in the condition of a bewildering maze. We have a superabundance of material to draw from, and seem to be determined to get our arms around it all during the four years that the student is in the high school. I wish that we could get ourselves out of this maze, and that some standards could be set up whereby the students and teachers might be made to feel that they are beginning somewhere; that they are traveling along some well-recognized path; and that they are heading for some goal worth the while to reach.

JAMES M. POWERS

PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SALEM, ORE.

COLLEGE-ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS AND THE SMALLER HIGH SCHOOLS

I have it from pupils from the University of Chicago, from Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, and Missouri universities, that their most difficult work in university life is Freshman English. Is there too big a jump from Senior high-school to Freshman university work? Could the Committee on College-Entrance Requirements prepare more definite requirements in composition work?

In preparing these there is one thing, if I may be so bold as to make a suggestion, to be taken into consideration. The requirements, it seems to me, should be made from the standpoint of the schools of the smaller towns, where the teachers have twice as many pupils in their total class enrolment as the teachers of the larger cities; because, I am sure, the majority of the Freshmen enrolled in the universities come from the former.

However, pupils from the larger towns have their troubles. This year three of our pupils entered the University of Chicago. One of them was enrolled in the most advanced division of the Freshmen English classes. He was an exceptional pupil with us. The other two were enrolled in the zero division. They were our average pupils. The roommate of one of them, a last year's graduate from a Chicago high school, also went into the zero class. All of them are finding their English their most strenuous work. A little friend who graduated from a high

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school in Madison found her first year's work in English in the University of Wisconsin most exhausting. I am continually hearing complaint from pupils from schools all over Missouri.

I have been sure in a few instances that the fault has been with the the universities. Many of them put their least experienced teachers in charge of the Freshman classes and, through a too great zeal, these teachers attempt to have their pupils do about the same work they themselves have just completed in their Senior year in some other school.

I am sure there are many teachers and pupils who will be grateful to the Council for aid along this line. For years the work suggested by the Committee on College-Entrance Requirements has been an unspeakable help.

JOSEPHINE NORVILLE

CHILLICOTHE, MO.

QUESTIONS FOR THE COUNCIL

Among the numerous questions the Council might profitably consider at an early date, I suggest the following:

1. Co-operation with the efforts of other bodies to secure uniformity in grammatical nomenclature in all language-study.

2. The organization of local associations to serve as branches of the National Council and to aid in disseminating the ideas of the Council.

3. The feasibility of the employment in secondary schools of assistants for theme-reading, so that experienced teachers may have more time for preparation and for classroom teaching.

4. The selection of a list of books for home reading. Such a list, which might contain several hundred titles, should receive the official approval of the Council and would form a valuable, uniform foundation for more extended lists to be constructed by individuals according to their preferences.

5. The determination and publication of the maximum number of pupils to whom a teacher may be expected to do justice, especially in composition, under conditions generally prevalent.

May I be pardoned for suggesting also that whatever measures are recommended by the Council should be based upon a substantial unanimity of opinion among authorities; and that wherever authorities exhibit a diversity of opinion, the Council should refrain from making any recommendation? The chief danger in the wholly praiseworthy effort to promote uniformity in the teaching of English is that of failing to allow sufficient latitude for varying personalities and conditions

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of work. The very nature of the teaching of English is such that there must be less uniformity of method and even of course of study than in the teaching of any other subject.

ERNEST C. NOYES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
PITTSBURGH NORMAL HIGH SCHOOL

MODERN LITERATURE FOR HIGH-SCHOOL USE

The Illinois Association of Teachers of English, at its meeting last week, instructed its delegates to the National Council to bring to attention the matter of current literature suitable for high-school use. There are two things we should like to see the Council do:

1. To include in its list for class reading, study, or whatever you choose to call it, some books of the last ten years. Our present custom of using only old books in the classroom leaves the pupil with no acquaintance with the literature of the present day, from which he is sure to choose his reading after graduation.

2. To appoint a committee to compile a list of comparatively recent books suitable for home reading by the pupils. All of us feel the need of such a list, but few of us feel that, unaided, we are able to choose intelligently or even safely. Through such a committee, this Council could frame a very satisfactory list.

We hope that, in spite of the many problems pressing for solution, it will not be found impossible to make at least a beginning in this direction.

WILBUR W. HATFIELD

FARRAGUT HIGH SCHOOL
CHICAGO, ILL.

UNIFORM GRAMMATICAL NOMENCLATURE

In the November number of the *School Review*, in my paper in the "Symposium on Grammatical Nomenclature," I expressed the opinion that our committee should go ahead and present a report at the St. Louis meeting of the Department of Superintendence. I ought to explain that that article was written last March. At that time I supposed that the National Education Association would make an appropriation for the use of its committee, to the end that we might meet and carry out the terms of our commission. No such appropriation was forthcoming, and our committee has not had a meeting. What work we have done has been done by correspondence.

Furthermore, since the article was written our committee has been

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joined with committees from the Modern Language Association and the American Philological Association. The work has taken on a much wider scope than was thought of when the article was written. Under the circumstances it will be impossible to make a report in 1912.

We who are working on this committee to unify the terminology of grammar feel that our task has vast and far-reaching import. We shall be glad if other teachers will suggest to us, either specifically or generally, the course they think we should pursue. We recognize thoroughly that we are the servants, and not the masters. We only hope that no one will convince himself so thoroughly that he will find it impossible to change his mind if the committee fails to take his point of view. It is not likely that any one person will be thoroughly satisfied with the report of the committee. The question for each teacher to ask himself when he comes upon something that he doesn't like, is this: Is it not of more importance that we should have uniformity in nomenclature than that I should have my own way?

If any teachers of English desire to look further into this vexed question of varying grammatical terms, they will find an interesting article in the *Philadelphia Teacher*, written by Principal McMullin of the Longfellow High School; or, if they will address me, I shall be glad to send reprints of my *Educational Review* article of 1910.

The gravity of the present situation may be suggested by the following statements: At the present time, in twenty-five English grammar texts there are ten different names for the use of *good* in the sentence "He is good," and eighteen different names for the use of *red* in the sentence "We painted our barn red." Other names vary in much the same proportion. Is it any wonder that our students do not know English grammar?

C. R. Rounds

West Division High School
Milwaukee, Wis.

VOCATIONAL THEMES

The English department of the Grand Rapids High School hopes it has found a means of solving the vital problem of preparing students for their vocations in life through a system of themes taken up in its classes. Such theme subjects as "My Three Wishes," "My Ancestors," "My Church," "My Easiest Studies" in the first year, give the teacher an idea of the child's environment, his resources, and his natural gifts. In the second half-year the theme subjects, "Three Elements of Success," "Why Marshall Field Succeeded," bring out those qualities which lead

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to success in life. This work is followed in the next year by exposition, preferably oral, of the duties, pay, hours of work, chances for rising, in the various vocations, especially in those open to people leaving high school at the end of the second year. During the third year each student writes on the vocation which he wishes to make his life-work and reads the life of some man great in that vocation. In such themes as, "Why I Choose Dartmouth," the student who plans to go to college gives his reasons for thinking that particular college will fit him best for his life-work. In the last year is emphasized what has been brought out as much as possible all through the course, the ideals of service to the church, the city, the state. "The Citizen's Duty to the Social Settlement," "The Obligations of Democracy," are examples of theme subjects. Not only does this plan offer a satisfactory method of vocational guidance but a practical means of ethical training; so it not only prevents the fitting of square pegs into round holes but sets ideals of "squareness" too.

MARTHA E. CLAY

HIGH SCHOOL
GRAND RAPIDS, MICH.

ORAL THEMES

I want to indorse strongly what has been said today with regard to the value of oral themes. We have done this work successfully for three years. We alternate oral with written themes, saving by this plan much of the time and strength expended in correcting papers, for the vital work of the classroom. The pupils select subjects based upon their experiences, or suggested by class discussions, or from current events. Sometimes, to stimulate interest, the class is allowed to choose a committee to make a program and assign the topics. In this case the teacher becomes one of the audience, delegating her authority to the committee.

The oral theme is not intended as a substitute for the written. It has its own value. It has been said that every recitation should be an oral theme. It should be, but is it? I do not believe the average pupil recites in well-developed paragraphs; alas! not always in well-developed sentences. Certainly this method will give greater fluency. It develops the critical faculty. Reckless vocabularies and grammatical lapses are matters of greater enormity if followed by a gleam of amusement in two score of eyes facing the speaker. The legitimate desire to acquit herself well before the class puts the speaker on her mettle. She must make her point, and make it as telling as possible, for her class-

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mates are quick, often more ruthless than the instructor, in detecting a weakness. But if properly directed, they are quick to discern the fine points.

I believe that oral themes furnish excellent training for clear, forcible thinking, and expression shorn of non-essentials.

ELIZABETH GRAEME BARBOUR

GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL
LOUISVILLE, KY.

ORAL COMPOSITION

Oral composition and class-correction are good means of improving written composition, but the time will never come when careful correction of papers is unnecessary. However, effective and economical methods will do a great deal to reduce the number of errors and so make the correction of compositions easier. By drawing up a list of cautions based on the errors actually made by preceding speakers and discussing these as a forewarning before the first composition is assigned, the common errors may be reduced to a minimum. By keeping his essays on file during the semester, and through the whole period of his attendance at school, a pupil comes to realize the importance of each exercise and to do his best work on it. A means to help him correct his individual mistakes is to make the necessary corrections in his essays and require him to explain in his next exercise why the corrections were necessary, writing rules, definitions, or discussions. The gain is great enough to warrant the labor.

MRS. HENRY HULST

HIGH SCHOOL
GRAND RAPIDS, MICH.

VITALIZING LITERATURE STUDY

I heartily approve of the attitude taken in a large part of the discussion today, that our chief thought should be about how to teach correct and effective speaking and writing. All that I have had in mind on that subject, however, has been admirably said by other speakers. As a kind of supplement to our discussion, I may perhaps be permitted to offer two specific suggestions for vitalizing the work in literature.

It is a well-known fact that no description in words, however perfect it may be from a literary standpoint, will convey to the mind of the reader any definite image, unless he has previously had some sense-impression which may serve as a means of interpretation. In spite of this fact, too many of us continue to ask our pupils to read literature

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about places and events about which they have no images, and we are astonished that they find the reading dull. It is obviously impossible to travel with our pupils in order to give them the necessary sense-impressions. But the next best thing is possible in most schools—the use of the lantern. It is surprising how few English teachers, even in schools where a good lantern is at hand, ever think of its value in their work. I have seen a class spend a week or more on Irving's sketch of Westminster Abbey and come from the work without images, but with a keen sense of weariness. Such waste of time is folly, and such blunting of the taste for literature is crime. A single day for the reading and an hour with a lantern and a few good slides would have been much more effective.

Another brief suggestion. We are well aware of the educational value of the acted play. Many of us, for the sake of our students, have taken advantage of the work of the Coburn Players, or of the Greet Players, to give the classic drama a vital intrepretation which would otherwise have been impossible. The smaller schools cannot use these large companies. A very acceptable substitute is at hand, however, in the professional reader. I doubt not that many here can remember when some bit of great literature was first vitalized for them by an adequate reading. Not all English teachers are good readers, and even if they were, the classroom routine, the familiarity of constant association, and the garish light of day are not conducive to inspirational readings. It would seem desirable, then, that Mr. Coburn's suggestion for a dramatic league among the colleges and universities be extended to the smaller schools. It might there take the form of a league that should employ a reader who could spend a few days as many times a year as desirable in each school, interpreting some of the world's great literature.

This suggestion may possibly have little interest for English teachers in large schools where the pupils have the advantage of good plays and good public readings. For the smaller schools it would be an excellent innovation.

VINCIL CAREY COULTER

STATE NORMAL SCHOOL
WARRENSBURG, MO.

NO HERO

The stereopticon has proved a very useful adjunct to my work in interesting pupils in the home surroundings of an author or in illustrating a book or play. It certainly makes things very clear to them;

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too much so, perhaps, for sometimes it tears down ideals we would like to keep.

During our study of Arthur's knights in "The Idylls of the King," I showed several illustrations of Lancelot. We had previously dwelt at some length on the heroism and bravery of this knight, for most children are very fond of him. When the first picture was shown, they saw a bearded man, marred with the scars of many battles. I felt, even in the dim light, a perceptible movement among the students, and I said, "Is this your idea of Lancelot?"

With one voice, several answered, "No!" And one boy added: "He's too old to be a hero!"

MARY NEWELL EATON

HIGH SCHOOL
GRAND RAPIDS, MICH.

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NEWS AND NOTES

THE DECEMBER MEETING OF THE NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

At the meeting of the New England Association of Teachers of English held in Boston, Saturday morning, December 9, the theme discusssed was "Composition."

The first paper, which appears in full in the January *Leaflet* of the Association, was presented by Professor William Allan Neilson, of Harvard University, under the title of "The Teacher of Composition." Professor Neilson feels that the composition teacher is at present very much overworked, and cannot continue to bring to his task the freshness and the enthusiasm which effective teaching demands. He therefore urges that all English departments should resist the tendency to separate the literature-teaching staff from the composition-teaching staff and then throw the heavier burden upon the latter group. He suggests various other devices, such as the free use of the wastebasket, and a decrease in the quantity of written work required, as appropriate methods of further relief.

Professor Neilson was followed by Mr. Alfred M. Hitchcock, of the Hartford Public High School, whose views were found to be in practical accord with Professor Neilson's. Mr. Hitchcock's paper presented twelve very concise and practical suggestions for economically disposing of composition work. He finds the use of the composition notebook particularly effective. It allows the teacher to see continually the growth of the student's powers, and encourages the severe self-criticism of the pupil.

Miss Dorothy Waldo, of the Brookline High School, next presented the merits of "Oral Composition." The continued demand for effective and correct speech in successful endeavor everywhere justifies the effort which the schools are now making to raise the standards in oral expression.

The closing paper of the session was presented by Miss Catherine Maher, of Providence. She emphasized the need of careful work on the structural side of the written composition. In illustration she presented various outlines which her pupils had made out in preparing for the work of actually writing the theme. She strongly recommended the

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method of class-outline. Select some suitable subject for a theme and spend the recitation period in having the class work out together the selection and order of the topics.

There were two important items of business. The Association voted to appoint a committee to encourage the formation of Round Table centers. While Boston is admittedly the best place for the Association to hold its meetings, other places in New England can increase their professional interest by organizing the English work and securing speakers recommended by the Association. Mr. Samuel Thurber, of the Technical High School at Newton, Miss Dorothy Waldo, of Brookline, and Professor H. G. Pearson, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, were appointed on this committee.

The Association also decided to accept membership in the National Council of English Teachers recently organized in Chicago. It was felt that large possibilities for good were resting in the new organization, and that New England ought to co-operate in the work.

The secretary of the Association has just prepared a list of *Leaflets* which the Association has published. A large number of these are available for distribution at five cents each, and may be secured from Mr. Samuel Thurber, Newton, Mass. The Association wishes to give wide publicity to the fact that anyone outside of New England may become a member on payment of one dollar annually. All members receive the monthly *Leaflet*. The editor of the *Leaflet* will gladly consider for possible publication any manuscripts dealing in a helpful way with any English problem.

Charles Swain Thomas, *Editor*

Newton, Mass.

ORGANIZATION OF A STATE ASSOCIATION IN INDIANA

The first annual meeting of the Indiana Association of Teachers of English was held in Indianapolis on November 10 and 11. Heretofore the English teachers had met only as a loosely organized section of the State Teachers Association. At the recent meeting a society was formed under a constitution designed to give the necessary permanence to the organization to make it effective. One hundred and seventy teachers were present and much enthusiasm was created. The speakers were Mr. J. Forbes Robertson, the eminent actor, President W. L. Bryan, of Indiana University, Professor F. N. Scott, of the University of Michigan, and Miss Adelaide Baylor, from the state department of education. Mr. Robertson spoke upon "English Pronunciation." In

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the course of his delightful talk he declared the cause of poor pronunciation to be ignorance, affectation, and indifference. The charm and value of his address lay in the fine standard of oral expression that he set before this body of teachers from all parts of the state by his own simple but beautiful speech.

Professor Scott discussed some ideals in teaching composition, and incidentally took issue with the recent utterance of Professor Lounsbury in *Harper's Magazine*.

On November 10, the Association held a dinner, which furnished a pleasant opportunity for promoting fellowship among the members. Such dinners will be a regular feature of the annual meetings.

The officers elected for the following year were: President, W. W. Livengood, Indianapolis; Vice-President, Lilian Brownfield, South Bend; Secretary-Treasurer, Odessa Zeis, Wabash; Editor, L. A. Pittenger, Bloomington; Member of Executive Committee, Adelaide Baylor, Indianapolis; Chairman of the Research Committee, N. W. Barnes, Greencastle; Chairman of the Publicity Committee, A. L. Murray, Richmond.

E. H. KEMPER MCCOMB

INDIANAPOLIS, IND.

THE ILLINOIS MEETING

The fifth annual meeting of the Illinois Association of Teachers of English was held at Urbana, November 24, in connection with the annual High School Conference at the University of Illinois.

At the morning session, Mr. C. M. McConn, of the University, reported the results of an investigation of high-school pupils' preferences in literature. Members of 209 classes were asked to rank the books they had read the previous semester in the order of their liking for them. In all 21,684 decisions were made, and the averages for the various books computed. Of the 41 books mentioned, Dickens' *Tale of Two Cities* ranked highest. A full account of the investigation will appear in the *Bulletin* of the Association, which may be obtained of Professor Harry G. Paul, Urbana, Ill. Mr. McConn has been asked to pursue his investigation among college students.

Problems for next year were proposed by Mr. W. W. Hatfield, of the Farragut High School in Chicago. The Association voted to approach recent high-school graduates with questions regarding the adequacy of their training in English to meet actual demands. A number of leading associations will join in this work, and the results will be made generally available through the National Council.

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The afternoon session was devoted to the College-Entrance Requirements. Professor J. F. Hosic, of the Chicago Teachers College, reported upon the work of the Committee of the English Round Table of the National Education Association. He pointed out that over half the college students of the country come from the Middle West, and hence that that section is deeply concerned in the matter of the entrance requirements, for the pupils who wish to go to college largely determine the course for all. The final report of this committee will appear in the *English Journal* for February.

Miss Caroline M. Rice, of the Central High School in Peoria, explained what use is made in that school of the material suggested in the reports of the Uniform Conference. She showed how the books named in the lists of the Conference may be arranged in a course, and declared for some study of more modern books. The daily reading habits of the pupils must be touched.

Professor John M. Clapp, of Lake Forest College, declared that the high schools must accept the responsibility of working out an effective English course. Pupils should be sensitized to the beautiful in life and art, they should be taught to think, and they should learn to express themselves with a fair degree of clearness and accuracy, both in speech and in writing.

The officers elected were: President, James F. Hosic, Chicago Teachers College; Secretary, Edward C. Baldwin, University of Illinois; Chairman of the Executive Committee, John M. Clapp, Lake Forest College.

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REVIEWS

GRAMMAR FOR TEACHERS

The usual textbook in grammar, which aims to be as elementary as possible, fails to solve some of the puzzles that an inquisitive class is likely to ask. The teacher himself, having no satisfactory authority, and unable to think out all the relationships of a sentence beyond the average degree of complexity, or, perhaps, unable to reduce his thinking to terms comprehensible to his class, too often falls into illogical or arbitrary decisions, which result in confusion both to him and his pupils. The causes of this situation appear to be two: first, the teacher has probably been trained in the old style of grammar, in which form was a matter of major, and function a matter of minor, importance; and second, the teacher has no authoritative book from which he can get the more correct functional point of view, and at the same time obtain a modern discussion of the problems of syntax, especially those not treated in the usual elementary text. The need of a class of books to meet the situation is, therefore, apparent, and is being met—books less formidable in bulk than the Goold Brown grammar, and more modern in point of view. Miss Leonard's[1] endeavor is worthy of high commendation. She has not written a school text, but has treated syntax in a manner suitable for teachers and advanced students, and has aimed to give the best modern thought on the subject. While the book is valuable for the information it imparts, it will be highly serviceable also in weakening what remains of the old reliance upon form (witness the matter of the "case" of nouns), and in strengthening the conception of English grammar as the science of thought-relationships.

CYRUS LAURON HOOPER

CHICAGO TEACHERS COLLEGE
CHICAGO ILL.

[1] *Grammar and Its Reasons, for Students and Teachers of the English Tongue.* By MARY HALL LEONARD. New York: A. S. Barnes & Co., 1910.

BOOK NOTICES

The Essentials of Exposition and Argument. By WILLIAM TRUFANT FOSTER. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1911. $0.90.

A text for high-school classes. To be commended for its use of modern material.

The New Criticism. By J. E. SPINGARN. New York: The Columbia University Press, 1911. Pp. v+35.

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Grammar and Its Reasons. By M. H. LEONARD. New York: A. S. Barnes & Co., 1910. Pp. 375. $1.50 net.

Reviewed elsewhere in these columns.

New Composition and Rhetoric. By ROBERT HERRICK and LINDSAY TODD DAMON. Chicago: Scott, Foresman & Co., 1911. Pp. 508. $1.00.

A popular book revised.

The Rhetorical Principles of Narration. By CARROLL LEWIS MAXCY. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1911. $1.25.

Biography, history, and fiction are treated, but the emphasis is upon the novel and the short story.

English. Book I. By ELVIRA DANIEL CABELL and VIRGINIA WINCHESTER FREEMAN. Chicago: William F. Roberts Co., 1911. Pp. 206.

English. Book II. By ELVIRA DANIEL CABELL and VIRGINIA WINCHESTER FREEMAN. Chicago: William F. Roberts Co., 1911. Pp. 308.

This new series for the elementary schools will be reviewed later.

Selections from Robert Louis Stevenson. By HENRY SEIDEL CANBY and FREDERICK ERASTUS PIERCE. New York: Scribner, 1911. Pp. xxi+457.

Done with taste and discretion. The volume will make Stevenson accessible for class-study. Contents: Introduction; Letters; The Amateur Emigrant; Essays; Father Damien; Stories.

A Study of Versification. By BRANDER MATTHEWS. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1911. $1.25.

A companion volume to the author's well-known *Study of the Drama.*

English Versification. By JAMES WILSON BRIGHT and RAYMOND D. MILLER. Boston: Ginn & Co., 1910. Pp. 166. $0.80.

Narrative and Lyric Poems for Students. By S. S. SEWARD, JR. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1909. Pp. xv+512.

Far better than Palgrave for boys and girls. To be reviewed in a later number.

Primer. By JAMES H. VAN SICKLE and WILHELMINA SEEGMILLER, assisted by FRANCES JENKINS. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1911. Pp. 127. Illustrated.

First Reader. By JAMES H. VAN SICKLE and WILHELMINA SEEGMILLER, assisted by FRANCES JENKINS. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1911. Pp. 128. Illustrated.

Second Reader. By JAMES H. VAN SICKLE and WILHELMINA SEEGMILLER, assisted by FRANCES JENKINS. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1911. Pp. 192. Illustrated. $0.40.

Third Reader. By JAMES H. VAN SICKLE and WILHELMINA SEEGMILLER, assisted by FRANCES JENKINS. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1911. Pp. 256. Illustrated. $0.50.

A First Reader. By CLARENCE F. CARROLL and SARAH C. BROOKS. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1910. Pp. 144. Illustrated.

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A Second Reader. By CLARENCE F. CARROLL and SARAH C. BROOKS. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1910. Pp. 168. Illustrated.

A Third Reader. By CLARENCE F. CARROLL and SARAH C. BROOKS. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1910. Pp. 224. Illustrated.

Tommy Tinker's Book. By MARY FRANCES BLAISDELL. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1911. Pp. 177. Illustrated. $0.60 net.

Little Plays for Little People. By MARION I. NOYES and BLANCHE H. RAY. Boston: Ginn & Co., 1910. Pp. vi+121. Illustrated. $0.35.

One Thousand Books for Children. By PENRHYN W. COUSSENS. Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co., 1911. Pp. xx+224.

A very good list for general reading. The titles are arranged according to the ages of the children for whom they are thought to be best suited, and there are special lists on myths, nature-study, handicraft, Bible stories, poetry, and "supplementary reading." There is an index of titles and one of authors.

A Child's Book of Stories. Selected and arranged by PENRHYN W. COUSSENS. Illustrated by JESSIE WILCOX SMITH. New York: Duffield & Co., 1911. Pp. 463.

One of the best collections of the old stories available. The large print and beautiful pictures make the book a handsome addition to the child's library.

The Tudor Drama. By C. F. TUCKER BROOKE. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1911. Pp. 461.

"A history of the English national drama to the retirement of Shakespeare."

A First Book in English Literature. By HENRY S. PANCOAST and PERCY VAN DYKE SHELLY. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1910. Pp. 497.

More of biography and less of criticism than its predecessors.

The Elementary Course in English: A Syllabus for Teachers. By JAMES FLEMING HOSIC. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1911. Pp. 150. $0.82.

The New Composition-Rhetoric. By FRED NEWTON SCOTT and JOSEPH VILLIERS DENNEY. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1911. Pp. 468.

The best features of the excellent Composition-Rhetoric and Composition-Literature in a single volume.

American Public Addresses. By JOSEPH VILLIERS DENNEY. Chicago: Scott, Foresman & Co., 1910.

A College Course in Writing from Models. By FRANCES CAMPBELL BERKELEY. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1910. Pp. 478.

One of the best collections of prose for study in composition classes available. Excellent questions and suggestions for study and writing are included.

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THE ENGLISH JOURNAL

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A NEW TASK FOR THE ENGLISH TEACHER

EMMA J. BRECK
Oakland High School, Oakland, Cal.

At a recent meeting at Harvard of New England college and secondary-school men, one of the two sessions was devoted to a presentation of three new plans for college admission. Ex-President Eliot humorously remarked that the occasion had proved the truth of the adage that there is nothing new under the sun, since otherwise the time-worn subject of college-entrance requirements, discussed every year for the past decade, would have finally been laid to rest. That the subject has enough vitality to have withstood for all these years the deadening effects of most educational conventions is an encouraging sign; especially is it encouraging that the English teachers of this country are raising their voices with increasing strength in their protest, for the insistence indicates a growing appreciation of the problems of modern secondary-school English, and a stronger realization that, under present conditions and restrictions, we are not only largely failing to perform the most obvious duty laid upon us, that of increasing a student's effective use of his mother-tongue, but, what is far more serious in the final analysis, are missing the opportunities our subject presents of vitally affecting that which is of far greater importance than a boy's speech—his thoughts and ideals.

That the universities and colleges by their uniform entrance requirements have rendered a valuable service to secondary schools is without question. Coming in a period when there was little uniformity in the training of high-school teachers, when interest in education as a science, even within the universities

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themselves, was in its feeble infancy, the setting of definite standards, the suggestion of new lines of endeavor, the limitation of individual caprice, the encouragement and stimulus given by the higher institutions, were invaluable in strengthening and unifying the work of the lower schools. That the fostering care of the colleges is still performing this valuable service is a grave question in the minds of many, and there are among us those who are convinced that, in many respects, college prescription is a serious hindrance to the best work of the high school. Of that number I myself am one.

What are the chief criticisms to be brought against the present high-school course in English? We all are used to the often bitter complaint against individual masterpieces. *Sir Roger de Coverley*, Milton's *Minor Poems*, Burke's *Speech on Conciliation*, the classic myths—all have had their share of condemnation; but these criticisms, although in most cases well founded, fail to strike at the root of the trouble. The gravest defect in the present course of English as prescribed by the universities and colleges is its total inadequacy to meet present conditions and needs. It fails not only to satisfy the interests and desires of the pupils themselves, but to do its part as it should toward developing them into the type of men and women which our civilization demands and for which our public schools are established and supported.

The main impression made on one who studies the schools of our country today is that of the tremendous complexity of our educational problems, due largely to the lack of homogeneity in our population. This is especially true of our great cities. America has been well called the great "mixing bowl," in which all nationalities at varying stages of growth are demanding a place. Education is no longer the comparatively simple process of a few generations ago, when the same kind of training sufficed for all. With the realization that different classes of society have different needs, and that we must meet those needs or perish from our own hospitality, has come the development of varying types of schools, and in place of the old academic college-preparatory school, or side by side with it, has sprung up the agricultural school of the country districts, the various vocational schools of the city, each trying to meet

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directly and quickly the most crying needs of the students to whom they minister. So far our educational work has been sound. It is when we examine the curricula of these various types of schools that we are struck with our slavish adherence to the old, for in the same school, side by side with the new vocational courses with their highly specialized training, we find the old college-entrance requirements still governing the academic courses, and prescribing not only the thing studied but the method of teaching it as well. For instance, in English work, boys and girls this country over are forced to plod their too often weary way through fields marked out by the universities and colleges, regardless of whether they ever intend to go to college and of whether the work fits their immediate needs or desires or has in it any permanent vitality for the future.

The assumption underlying this continued dominance of the university ideal must be one of two: either the majority of students are going to college and therefore need special training to facilitate their entrance; or what the college has prescribed as suitable preparation for its work best prepares for life. Neither of these assumptions is true. The number of students who enter college each year is still but a small percentage of the total enrolled in high schools, and in many localities, especially in our great seaport and manufacturing centers, the number applying for college training from the majority of the high schools is so small as not to warrant consideration in the formation of a general course of study. The second assumption, that what prepares for college best prepares for life, is equally false. The day may have been when no better preparation in English could have been given the majority of high-school boys and girls than that now laid down by the College Entrance Board, but that day has passed never to return, and it behooves both high-school teacher and college professor to recognize the fact, and to revivify and enrich our offering till it is adequate to meet modern conditions and needs.

What then are the defects of our present course in English? To answer this it is necessary that we should have a clear conception of our aim in teaching it. We can easily recall the usual statement: (1) to teach the correct use of English; (2) to develop a liking for good reading, and the power to understand and appre-

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ciate it. The first purpose no one will attempt to gainsay. Whatever else may be our idea of the possibilities and responsibilities of our work, no true teacher of English will try to shirk his duty to give to his pupils all possible ability to handle the English language with correctness, ease, and even power, since it is a tool on the efficient use of which much of his future success in life will depend. The second statement is fair enough if we fill it with content enough. The vital point is not merely that we should make readers of our boys and girls, but that we should make their reading a positive force for good; that by means of their reading we should help in the formation of right ideals of thought and of action. To do this we must fill them with a love for the best that is in good things, with a distaste for the cheap and vulgar; we must train not only the mind to think, but the imagination to see, the heart to feel and desire, the will to determine, to have, and to be that which is noblest and best. And never in the history of America have we English teachers had more need than today to hold clearly before ourselves this great spiritual purpose of our work, that our mission is primarily to stimulate, to awaken, to quicken, to feed, for never has the nation more needed our help. We are a country of wonderful material advancement and wealth, but we cannot remain truly great without spiritual development as well. No nation can succeed permanently without high aims; its "reach must exceed its grasp." It is for us teachers of English consciously to strive to develop the "reach." There is great need of this today, for many of the old forces for good that furnished past generations with a present help in time of trouble have ceased to be operative or are fast losing their efficiency. We are no longer a Bible-reading people; the church and Sunday school are fast losing their hold; family life is less intimate and watchful; respect for law and authority is decreasing, while forces of evil are steadily multiplying in our midst. The moving pictures and the vaudevilles, cheap and commonplace if not immoral, the trashy magazine, the daily newspaper with its scandal and vulgar comic supplement are but a few of the agencies at work which have already helped to bring about a cheapening of ideals, a lowering of standards, and a blunting of fine sensibilities and distinctions, already ominously perceptible in our American people, both man and youth.

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It is time that we English teachers, recognizing our responsibility as awakeners of the spirit, should ask ourselves what we are doing to check this downward tendency. The permanent value of our work must always be largely a matter of hope and trust, since we cannot follow our boys and girls into the temptations and trials of life; but its immediate value we can estimate with some fairness, and the test we must apply is the student's attitude toward it, for the law holds here that applies to other forms of moral uplift: there must be a reaction in the mind of the receiver or our ministrations have been in vain. The first and necessary sign of that reaction is interest—the quickened eye, the more alert mind, the eager question, the insistent discussion—signs that we all at blessed moments have had as precious evidences that our work has not been in vain. Is our English course as at present taught bringing that result? Judging from the testimony of a large percentage of English teachers it cannot be, since if so, why the earnest, even insistent, demand for a change in our English requirements? That it does not please the students as it should is shown too conclusively by the attitude of many a class, attentive in body, inattentive in spirit, perfunctorily memorizing facts about literary masterpieces, but neither thinking, feeling, nor enjoying.

In the East and Middle West the full classes in English may be taken by some objector as evidence that this statement is overdrawn; but when we consider that in these parts of the country English is a prescribed study for each year of the high-school course, numbers will prove nothing. Moreover, the protesting voice of the English teacher is strong from those very sections. In California, where the elective system in vogue in the colleges has found its way into the high school, the English course is put to a truer test. But two years of work are required for university admission, and that completed, students are free to choose practically what they will. Their choice is usually governed by one or two things: they select either what they like, what they are interested in, or what they can see is of use. To the immature mind "useful" usually means of practical benefit in earning a living or in meeting the immediate needs of everyday life. Judged by this standard our present English courses, with the exception of so-called "business English" and public speaking, too often fail to appeal to high-

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school students, although it is a significant fact that the oral work wins a ready approval from boys and many of the girls, even where natural timidity makes it difficult. The second test, that of interest, when applied to our English curriculum, seems also to fail. Unfortunately for our self-satisfaction, to our students "interest" does not necessarily mean a liking for that which appeals to mature minds, nor for that which we think is good for them, for, left free to choose, many drop English at the end of the second year, others at the end of the third, and only about one-half a graduating class continues the subject to the end. To be sure, they are usually delightful pupils to teach; there has been a survival of the fittest that results in a quick and ready response to the work we have to offer, but what of the other 50 per cent we have lost? If I am right as to the mission of an English teacher—if a large part of the burden of wakening the spiritual nature is not only our duty but our pride and glory, can we afford without clamorous protest longer to fail to reach so large a percentage of our students?

The time is ripe for reform. How and from whom is it to come? It must and, from the nature of things, should, emanate from the ranks of secondary-school teachers. The university in the past has done its best toward elevating the high school, but its old best is no longer adequate. It is today engrossed with its own problems, due, as are ours, to changes in our civilization and consequent changes in educational needs. It has sent out into secondary-school teaching a large body of trained men and women, whose willing task it must be to discover not only the failures in the work we are doing, but the possibilities of reform. The day for purely destructive criticism has passed. What is needed is a recognition on the part of high-school teachers that the problem and its solution are ours. We must go to the universities and colleges, not as carping critics seeking to place blame nor as timid dependents asking favors, but as earnest coworkers, fully alive to the difficulties of the situation for both colleges and high schools, and with practical, definite recommendations for its improvement.

And how are we to go about the solution of our problem? First, we must clearly and definitely settle for ourselves our real aim in teaching English. We must answer that first question of all fair criticism: What are we trying to do? Then, Is the thing worth

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doing? If not, What can we do that would be better? The attempt to answer these questions will bring us to the consideration of the type of school in which we are working, to the special needs of our student body, and the failure or success of the present course to meet those needs. The next stage is experimental. Openly and boldly if we are so fortunate as to be working under intelligent, broad-minded, unprejudiced school directors, behind closed doors if not, in such time as we can steal from prescribed work, we begin our search for a more vital course in English. Let no one enter here who is not equal to the task. It calls for patience, for zeal, for self-denial, for the ability to divest our minds of all scholastic traditions; the willingness, if necessary, to overturn all educational idols; the readiness to sacrifice precious leisure to hours of search, since the well-trodden field of the classics, made easily familiar by our college training and later college prescription, can no longer wholly satisfy our needs. And having found the promising material, still more hours must be spent in studying its possibilities and the best method of approach, for our constant watchword must be, "We must interest that we may hold; we must interest that we may teach; we must interest that we may arouse, inspire, uplift."

That such experimentation, difficult as existing conditions make it, is not impossible is proved by the work that is today being carried on in numberless schoolrooms in the United States. What is needed to make it most profitable is the further step of co-operation. The experiment of the original, fertile-minded teacher must be brought to the notice of the great majority, who are willing and able to follow, but are without the supreme gift of creative ability which can originate. There must be greater willingness to share what has proved profitable, more open-mindedness and readiness to try the discoveries of others, more gathering-together for mutual consultation and advice, until slowly, out of much patient effort and co-operation, we arrive at conclusions which we can confidently and insistently offer to the colleges of this country as at least a beginning of the solution of our problem. Such co-operation, unlimited by sectionalism, is made possible for the first time by the newly formed National Council of English Teachers. To it and to the schools of the Middle West, highly fortunate in their liberty, we may hopefully look for signs of the dawn of a new day.

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THE ORGANIZATION OF THE COURSE IN LITERATURE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS[1]

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Now that the eastern universities are abandoning the system of examining on certain masterpieces, by which they had practically dictated to the secondary schools what should constitute the course of reading, and now that they are following the universities of the Middle West in leaving the secondary schools free to read what they will, when they will, and as they will, the movement will doubtless extend throughout the length and breadth of the land, and teachers of literature will have an opportunity to do their best in their teaching. As a sequel we shall soon be called upon to justify our freedom by improvement in the output from our schools. It behooves us, therefore, to consider betimes and to arrange our course to secure by proper economies and improved methods (1) better habits of work, (2) keener appreciation, and (3) consequent power of a superior order. We shall find, as do other business concerns when they reorganize, that by a little ingenuity and care we can conserve much that we are now wasting, and reap a rich percentage in by-products.

The National Conference on Uniform Entrance Requirements in English has advised us to organize our work, and thanks to the labors of the Conference for years past, we have never been in so favorable a state to attempt organization. First, we are accustomed to studying the masterpieces themselves instead of snatches from them and books about them, and we do not deaden the interest by too much biography and history, but enliven it by enough; second, we have a flexible list, offering more for the most fortunate and efficient schools, and requiring not too much from the least; third, we have on that list a goodly proportion of pieces that we

[1] Read before the National Council of Teachers of English, Chicago, December 1, 1911.

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shall want to keep, though it needs revision to displace the less worthy pieces by selections that give literary types not now represented and that strengthen spots notably weak in our course. It is to be hoped that the Conference will continue its labors, especially if it is ready to adopt its own good advice, and will help to organize our course. It is to be hoped that a committee whose word carries weight will serve as an advisory board, if this present committee, as constituted, does not continue to serve. The old distinction between *reading* and *study* may well be dropped, for the "reading" should be done with creditable care, and sometimes with minuteness, but the term "study," as it is used here in contradistinction, is certain to continue the abuse of a deadening learning-for-its-own-sake. What need not be a vice in a professional scholar, and may be encouraged in the few members of the class to whom it is natural, is disastrous when imposed on all in the study of literature.

One of the weak spots that we recommend the Conference to strengthen is in the home reading. It is very desirable that habits of individual reading be fostered, and to this end it would be well to stimulate, and in some fashion to control, the reading of a list of modern books throughout the course. We wish to develop a habit of independent reading, not of required books (for all pupils of one grade have not the same likings or the same degree of proficiency in reading, and on these books little help will be given by discussions in class), but of a generous list of selections from what the children, or children of previous classes, have liked, along with other books that the teacher suggests. The privilege of substituting books that they have found worthy may well be accorded individuals and schools that labor under harder conditions than usual. In my own twelfth-grade classes the books that were reported range from Plato and *The History of Napoleon* down to Oliver Optic and Henty. If time is occasionally taken for each pupil to tell the class what he has read lately that he liked, the personal recommendation will do much to stimulate reading and to raise the quality of books read by the class, as well as to humanize the class and to secure a true social culture.

The purpose of our course, in literature as in composition, should be immediately practical, to teach a pupil to express the

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ideas that come to him from the whole range of his experience. To that end it should aim to include all of the best types in prose and poetry—epic, lyric, drama, narrative, essay, oration—and in these the structural beauty and effectiveness of style should be noted, as well as the thought, or content. The best methods of narration, description, exposition, and argumentation should be seen as they occur in the masterpieces studied, and this study should be supplemented by exercises in composition aiming to give more knowledge, and practice in its use. A good textbook, if it is not abused, will add to the efficiency of this work. Until pupils have felt the beauty of the form in the best and most original types of literature, they will lack the best preparation to give fit form to their own ideas when occasion comes for them to express themselves. It is because this formal side of literature is so practically valuable, so essential in the teaching of composition, and because this side of the literature will be so much more carefully considered when composition is taught together with literature, that I should consider it a great mistake to separate high-school courses in composition and literature.

The less immediately practical purpose of the study of the content of literature is not the less valuable to the life of the student, for the body is more than raiment. By his reading he comes to appreciate and use a noble art; but also, traveling in the realms of gold under the sway of those kingly spirits, he widens his horizon and learns the distant and the past, whence he can return to understand and cherish the better all that is good in his present. If he reads aright, his spirit is roused from its passive state, and he enters into the life of his book for or against, as judge of its good and its evil. It will be observed that I am following Plato in considering the *goodness* of the pieces selected as their most important quality, though *beauty* is the quality to be sought most in the study of their form. Plato held that the purpose of telling children great stories was to make them "heroes" for the state; we are teaching our young people, by the moral and religious questions that they encounter in the best literature, to consider their duty as citizens in the Kingdom of God. How can *Macbeth* and *The Idylls of the King* be read without opening the eyes of the spirit to moral and

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religious truths? Plato was doubtless too good an artist to want to preach stories (which usually hold their moral in solution), but he was an educational artist in selecting for his course the stories that had the right morals, "models of virtuous thought, picturing God as good, and heroes as good men." To multiply the strength of the impression, stories should be told also of men who break the moral law and are broken by it in turn. And modern children should have stories from the literature of the past, old pagan stories, like the *Odyssey*, to see what was beautiful and good in those times, but also what was not good as compared with the modern. Following these, they should have mediaeval ballads, romances, and tales, the best and the worst in chivalry as judged in the light of our ideals. Until they have read some of the literature of the past, they cannot appreciate the present justly, with its fruits of the struggle from pagan to Christian, from mediaeval to modern. In the elementary schools the reading is very largely from modern times; in the high school we should plan that a part of it shall be selected and ordered so as to widen the interests of the pupils and bring them into their heritage, the riches bequeathed the race by the ancestors, a knowledge of the ages that are past.

A lack of the sense of the past is one of the weak spots in American education, as compared with European, and this we should aim to strengthen if possible when we displace the less worthy pieces of literature from our list. It is said that more than other nations we turn our faces to the future, and it is a hopeful sign that we do so; but the past of every nation that composes our American race has riches of wisdom and beauty that should not be lost simply because the ancestors crossed an ocean. Far from having no legends and traditions, Americans have the right, by direct descent, to all that Europe has produced of heroic legend and tradition back to the dawn of time, and we should make certain that the children are not deprived of their heritage. In our continent of literature there should be no boundaries, and it would be folly to limit ourselves to the literature of any one European nation, particularly to take inferior pieces from that while we omit the best from the others. To be perfectly definite on this point, it would be well to change the title of our course to

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Literature and Composition instead of *English*, which is a misleading term.

Has the time not come for us now to adopt consciously for our policy *the selection of the best from all of the sources*, so approving and continuing the wise tendency that Ticknor and Longfellow introduced at Harvard, and so securing among ourselves the most valuable knowledge, the finest literary sense, and the widest sympathies with all the sister-nations whose sons and daughters we are?

If we displace from our list the pieces that are second best, we can add within a few years in their place more of myth and mediaeval legend: (1) a piece of biography by Plutarch; (2) a translation of a Greek drama; (3) a northern saga, as *King Olaf*, from Longfellow or from the Heimskringla; (4) an animal epic, as *Reynard the Fox;* (5) some legends of the saints, as *St. George and the Dragon;* (6) incidents of the Crusaders at Jerusalem and Charlemagne's Peers in Spain; (7) examples of the extravagant in chivalry that show its decay, as *The Seven Champions of Christendom* and *Don Quixote*, which laughed decrepit chivalry out. By making the right selections we can give our pupils the source material on which to base their comparisons of the life and ideals in the different ages, and we can rouse a real and vital interest as compared with the interest that is given when they are asked to read books to be able to take an examination on them, to be intelligent on them, or even to enjoy their beauty.

Given a list of the best books suited to high-school pupils, chosen from ancient, mediaeval, and modern times and including all of the best types developed—epic, lyric, drama, essay, narrative—it is clear that we shall not secure the best results by running through our assortment in a haphazard fashion, or even by shifting empirically from place to place. By a haphazard order we can obtain at best a conglomerate, lacking in coherence and proportion and lacking in the interest and effectiveness which we wish to secure for each piece. We can secure greater interest in the *Bunker Hill Oration*, and greater effectiveness, if we do not read it just after the *Odyssey*, but after some piece that has a bond of connection with it. The necromancers and spirits of the *Faerie Queene* will be comprehended best by preceding them and following

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them with the witches who tempted Macbeth, and by other stories of fairies, goblins, and ghosts that terrified the men of that time. These reinforce each other, and after enough of them have been read, the character of the period to which they belong will be clear, and a strong historical background will have been formed for the reading of any mediaeval literature that will be encountered later. This will give all of the knowledge of mediaeval times that some of the pupils acquire, for all do not take mediaeval history. We can arrange the order of the masterpieces so that they are of interest individually, but of greater interest and value as parts of a larger whole; so that they are apprehended in relation with other pieces of their time and school, but also, along with their school, in contrast to those that preceded and followed. When a pupil is taking a course he should not merely be wandering about in it, but he should know if possible from the beginning its aim and the final state that he is to attain. He should feel that he is making progress. When he has finished he should be able to look back over it with a sense not merely of certain authors who expressed certain ideas in certain form, but with a sense of differences in spirit, ideas, and form between the ancient, the mediaeval, and the modern; with a habit of looking for new forms as they appear; and even with an inkling that there is a logic in their evolution from the less to the more complex. Is it too much to try to teach him in literature as he is being taught in history, that through the ages an increasing purpose runs? If all of this can be done without increasing the work at present required, by merely organizing his reading course and asking questions and making comments by the way, is it not well worth the doing? Without this higher knowledge and this habit of comparison and relating all to life, our pupil will have on hand at the end of his course some assets (he can't help having some), but he will have also much that remains to him as dead learning—and a vice. He will probably have disliked his work, and will hold a lifelong grudge against the innocent masterpieces that he had to read in school. The pity of it!

From what I have said it is evident that I am for a logical and historical teaching of the masterpieces, primarily to secure the best condition for their study, the best understanding and appre-

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ciation of their spirit, development, and form. A piece of literature is fashioned of the very blood and bone of its time and cannot be understood apart from the body to which it belonged.

The next principle to observe in organization is that the periods and schools should be approached consecutively in point of time. The more effective approach to the spirits, fairies, goblins, ghosts, witches, and devils of the *Faerie Queene* and *Macbeth* is not from modern times, but from pagan times, when Athene dashed down the heights of Olympus and Hermes passed swift as a thought, when Circe transformed men into beasts, and Odysseus descended alive into Hades. If mediaeval literature is approached from modern, it will probably be misapprehended, and, because we have come to smile at superstitions, pupils will take them as lacking in reality, as being merely light and playful fancy. It will be more difficult for them to realize how Shakespeare's audience, who believed in witches and apparitions, looked upon the witches and apparitions in *Macbeth*.

An additional, and a very practical, reason for filling the first years of the high-school course with folk-tales, myths, and mediaeval lore is psychological—that our student in those years is in his early adolescence, when his nature craves the distant and the heroic, though not in the old childish way. If he has been fortunate, his reading books in the grades have supplied him abundantly with fairy tales and myths; it will now be a revelation to him to review them, and view them in the light of literary qualities, and of historical, moral, and religious values. He will find that *Little Red Riding Hood* is a gem of narration and description—vivid, dramatic, condensed, simple, excellent in construction, ingenious in device; he can learn many of his rhetorical terms in the discussion of its beauties. Excellent subjects for exercises in oral composition are selected fairy tales and myths, one presented by each member of the class, and these so planned that they will give, together, ideas of the history and relation of some of the most famous pieces. The English version of *Cinderella* in contrast with the German version presents fundamental agreement, but interesting variations; *Beauty and the Beast* and *Cupid and Psyche* show unexpected relations between fairy tale and myth; *The Sleep-*

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ing Beauty and *Siegfried Awakening Brunhild* reveal a like relation between fairy tale and tradition of demi-god and hero; *Perseus and Andromeda* and *St. George and the Dragon* show a growth from pagan myth into Christian allegory and will prepare the way for the Red Cross Knight of the *Faerie Queene.*

In the first year's work in the high school, mythology can be, perhaps, best taught incidentally while the *Odyssey* is read, and, if there is time enough, myths of the Northern Cycle and *Hiawatha*, all with a view to their religion and morals as well as to their epic form and spirit. If, like Schliemann, the pupil has been fortunate enough to read a children's version of the tale of "Troy divine" when he was eight years old, believing that there was a Troy, he will return to it with greater interest when he is thirteen, to dig out the sacred citadel and the tomb of Agamemnon with the archaeologist and to penetrate more deeply into the life pictured in the great story. A good exercise is for each pupil to undertake a piece of historical research in a small way, accumulating materials as he reads with a view to presenting them in an essay toward the end, one pupil keeping a list and description of the parts of the palaces, another of all of the furniture mentioned, another of games, another of armor and weapons, others of gods and devotions, all contributing a section to a chapter of history. The *Odyssey* should be discussed as the Bible of the Greeks, with a view to its moral and religious teachings, for unfortunately myths are told in the classical dictionaries with no attempt to reveal the mystic meanings in their depths. Without interpretation, and as mere stories, they and the *Odyssey* come under condemnation in Plato's category of "just casual tales . . . . with moral ideas the very opposite of those which are to be held by the children when they are grown up." Not only are unassimilated myths dangerous in this way that Plato pointed out, but without their moral and religious significance they are positively misleading and untrue, for the religious meaning predominated in them and they were believed in to the extent that a man was condemned to the hemlock who discredited them. We should not waste the time and muddle the minds of the children on uninterpreted myths, but teach them (1) as what the Greeks believed and (2) as admirable or not in the light of our own reli-

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gion and philosophy. Athene and Apollo, when held to the test, are seen to make for sweetness and light, wisdom and justice; Perseus and Prometheus make for self-devotion and self-sacrifice; but many of the Greek gods make for evil and belong where Milton put them, along with Moloch, Belial, and Satan in the Fiery Lake. Even a young child will grasp the good points in a myth and see in the morals of the bad ones the reason why Greek paganism had to pass away when tried by Christian standards. Which goddess, Athene or Aphrodite, was worth the service of a life? Which queen was the ideal woman? Aphrodite assisted by Ares (there is a profound moral to the relation of these two, for war follows in the service of such love) could not protect Helen after she deserted her husband; Apollo and the Furies raised the hands of her own son against Clytemnestra because she killed her husband, who, it must be admitted, was a cruel and unjust man in his treatment of Achilles and in his sacrifice of his own daughter Iphegenia to his success in war; Heaven rewarded Penelope because she remained true to her wandering spouse through his absence of eighteen years. How did the ideal youth of Homer's time treat his mother? his old nurse? his swineherd? his guests? his friend? his hosts? What did Wisdom require him to do for his father? How did he take up the responsibilities of life? call a meeting, and make a speech? How did he conduct himself on his travels? How did he pray to his gods? How did he treat his father after the return? And Odysseus, who was wise with the wisdom of Athene and not won away by the promise of immortality or the wiles of the beautiful goddess Calypso, but who endured the greatest of trials to return to his faithful wife—was he quite the perfect hero in his character of spoiler of cities? When he slew the less guilty among the suitors who promised to reform their lives and to give ransom, could he in this equal the Christian Knight-Errant, who went forth to right the wrongs of others and granted mercy to a prostrate foe? Will the great Achilles stand that comparison when he denies the prayers of the aged Priam and gives the body of Hector to be mutilated, dragged, and devoured by dogs?

Is such teaching, in motive and result, for the history, or for the literature? Neither is secured without it, and the two seem inseparable, and are secured by it.

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AN OUTLINE OF THE COURSE

It is economical of effort if, in the first year of the high-school course, myths and the *Odyssey*, Plutarch's *Lives*, Macaulay's *Horatius*, Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* are read and discussed in class at the time the pupils are studying in history the Greek and Roman periods. While these selections give pagan ideas, they present a good variety of rhetorical types, with material for comment on narration, description, and dramatic presentation; and the study of their literary art can be made the more effective by assigning parallel exercises and essays in composition, some from modern life, some from ancient. One of the best essays by a ninth-grade pupil that I ever read was a monologue, excellent in imitation, poetic, lofty, high and serious in style, on the subject "The Account that Hermes Gave to the Council of the Gods of his Mission to Ogygia"; another was an account in monologue of Odysseus' sailing into the present harbor of New York and experiencing Coney Island, before the fire. For individual reading in this year we may well require some Bible stories from the Old Testament, as (1) Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac (how does it compare with Agamemnon's sacrifice of Iphegenia?), (2) the bondage of Joseph, (3) the life of Moses, and (4) the wanderings of the children of Israel. Discussion of the *Odyssey* will quicken an interest in the Bible, and pupils will come from this reading with a better vision of the material conditions of ancient life, the motives and the morals involved. For independent reading in this grade I have known pupils to like *Ben Hur*, *The Last of the Mohicans*, *The Thrall of Leif the Lucky*, *The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come*, *The Blazed Trail*, and *The Riverman*, but some prefer books of a lower grade, *The Little Colonel* stories and books by Henty and Alger still persist. I, for one, should never compel a pupil to finish a book, for home reading, that he did not like. If it cannot hold him, he had better try something else. If it is a good book and he does not like it, he is probably too young for it, and may like it later. If there is a historical element in his book, it is doubly well.

I have written thus fully of the first year's literature to suggest the method for the rest of the course. In the second year many books on mediaeval literature are fit for class reading and discussion, some of them by nineteenth-century writers—Ballads, *The*

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Idylls of the King, *Sir Launfal*, *The Ancient Mariner*, and *Ivanhoe*. These are sufficient to give a general idea of the Middle Ages, though weak, as I have indicated, in selections from the Continent. To supplement this work, pupils can present to the class as topics in oral composition other stories of phantoms, witches, goblins, fairies of the period. Some excellent stories from the Continent are accessible in the *Tales of the Wayside Inn* and the *Golden Legend*.

A still further advantage can be gained in the third and fourth years of the course by studying English and, finally, American masterpieces, in their periods; and their study will be more effective if a good textbook for reference be adopted on the history of English and American literature. If the *history* instead of the literature is the purpose of the course, and predominates—especially if the literature is *read about*, and not *read*—the study of both the history and the literature will be ineffective; but if the masterpieces are read with a sufficient background of knowledge of the period and the life of the author, not only will their study as literature be more effective, but the history of literature will incidentally be more effectively acquired at the same time. Another advantage in this arrangement of the masterpieces is that if circumstances are favorable a considerable amount of supplementary material can be added, by insertion of additional reading, or by provision for topics to be presented as oral composition. So when the class are considering the drama before reading *Macbeth*, each member of the class can tell the substance of some early dramatic performance.

By a chronological arrangement of pieces from English literature, the first half of the third year will still present mediaeval subjects, though emerging into modern, (1) The *Prologue*, (2) the *Faerie Queene*, and (3) *Macbeth*. Modern tendencies toward reformation and revolution are found in two of the three, as well as new types of composition. The second half of this year will include Milton, Burke, and Burns, with a still more modern spirit and relation to reform and revolution, as well as contribution to literary form.

The first half of the fourth year will include writers of the nineteenth century in England—Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, Scott, Macaulay, Dickens, George Eliot, Browning, Tennyson, and as many others as are desired. Pupils will now be old enough and

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well enough prepared to do considerable independent reading, which discussion in the class will direct, always attentive alike to spirit and to rhetorical form.

The last half of the year will give still further developments in American literature, the masterpieces for study being the *Farewell Address*, the *Bunker Hill Oration*, and the *House of the Seven Gables* —good examples of the political and social ideals attained, and of fit literary form. A textbook of the history of American literature and an extended system of individual reading will here secure excellent results.

A pupil who has seen his subject presenting matter so vital to his spirit and so practical in its usefulness as literature and composition are capable of being, should come from its study with appreciation of beauty and a consciousness of practical value received. If he does not, it may be that he is at fault; it may be his teacher. Let us see to it that it is no longer his weak and ineffective course.

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THE ENGLISH COURSE IN THE HIGH SCHOOL: THE NEW ENGLAND VIEW[1]

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My first remark is a candid admission. I do not pretend to know what the New England view of the English course in our high schools really is. It seems to me about as difficult to analyze as it is to differentiate between the policies advanced by the progressive Republicans and the policies advanced by the progressive Democrats. I am reminded, too, of a scene in *The Blue Bird*. You remember that when Maeterlinck allows Tyltyl and Mytyl to roam at midnight among the tombstones and wooden crosses of a country graveyard, the gloom gradually gives place to an efflorescent light; and when the graves finally open, the whole scene is transformed into a fairy-like and nuptial garden, dimly lighted by the rays of dawn. The dew glistens, the wind murmurs, the lilies appear in full bloom; and as Tyltyl sees the mystery of it all explained, he cries out joyfully, "There are no dead." Just now I seem to be wandering among darkened tombs. As the hours advance, perhaps I shall discern some fairy's wand dissolving the darkness and hear some voice confidently explain, "There is no New England view." However, as I remember New England's early acquired reputation for "dissidence of dissent" and likewise recall our more modern monthly sparring matches at the English Lunch Club of Boston, I am inclined to say rather, "There are scores of New England views." My present task is to discover, if I am able, what unity of opinion there may possibly be in all this variety. But first let me outline a few of the salient principles on which there would probably be general agreement.

We are agreed that the work in English should cultivate habits

[1] Prepared for the meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English, December 1, 1911.

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of accuracy, develop appreciation of the beauty of language, and secure to the pupil an enlargement and an enrichment of the ideals of life. To accomplish this it is necessary that teachers throw conscious emphasis upon three distinct phases of English instruction: (1) grammar; (2) composition; (3) literature.

GRAMMAR

It is a mistake for the high-school teacher to assume that the teaching of grammar is not his proper function. Even though the instruction in grammar in the graded schools has been particularly efficient, there is in the composition classes of the high school constant need for a review of grammatical principles, and there is likewise constant opportunity for further systematic progress in the study.

Review is necessary in order to avoid educational waste. The teacher in his use of technical terms must see that his instruction is being understood. He must insist that the comprehension of the term *compound sentence*, for example, precludes such a sentence as the following from being thought of as compound: "Washington's *Farewell Address* and Webster's *Bunker Hill Oration* are studied in the Senior year." He must throw constant emphasis upon the agreement of the pronoun with its antecedent, and upon the correct use of verb forms. The names of the various tenses and cases must be correctly applied. And in the same manner, practically all of the terms in technical grammar, as occasion for their uses arises, will need to be reviewed.

There will be need, too, for further advance in grammatical knowledge. When the teacher feels, for instance, that the composition work of his class can be strengthened by teaching the difference between *co-ordinating* and *subordinating* connectives, he will pause in his work and throw emphasis upon that distinction. And he will not hesitate to do this even though he is put to the exertion of teaching a distinction which the pupils in the graded schools may never have learned.

But we are not to assume that this work in grammar is to contribute to the efficiency of instruction in composition only. It is constantly a helpful agency in the interpretation of literature. The

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identification of a part of speech, the case of a noun, the dependence of an infinitive—these are often the test of a pupil's understanding of a passage.

What the English teacher needs constantly to remember, then, is that a knowledge of grammar is helpful in securing a sense of accuracy in expression and in developing a sense of sureness in interpretation.

COMPOSITION

The definite aim in composition teaching is to enable the pupil to speak and to write in strong, simple, clear, and correct English. Having secured from a majority of his pupils habitual strength, simplicity, clearness, and correctness, the teacher may study the advisability of trying to arouse in a few of the more select and capable the additional element of charm.

The work in composition should be of two sorts—oral and written—each graded in such a way as to accord with the mental equipment of the pupil and at the same time to inspire a healthy reach. Inasmuch as the pupil's English is far more frequently employed in oral than in written expression, it is profitable to emphasize systematic work in oral composition. Now oral composition, as thus considered, is not applied to the short, fragmentary sentences that pupils use in play or among unconventional surroundings; it is applied to longer, more connected speech—incidents, personal experiences, reproductions of stories, character-sketches, explanations, topics in history and in science—any oral account, in short, that is large enough in scope to demand attention to its form and structure. In this drill, however, the emphasis is not merely upon English form and structure. Effective teaching here demands criticism upon the proper pronunciation of words, clear enunciation of syllables, posture, ability to stand before the class and look the members in the eye—any of those characteristics, indeed, which aid in the oral delivery of thought.

The sort of structure which drill in oral composition secures—except, perhaps, in the advanced grades—can never be other than simple. In the aim toward the more elaborate, the valuable disciplinary implement that directs toward accuracy is the written composition. Here the form is neither fragile nor evanescent.

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The pupil's production is before him and before his teacher. By each it may be critically examined. The teacher first should point out the errors in spelling, in grammar, in simple rhetoric. Then, as a means of securing broad ideas of structure, the pupil should be taught to ask himself three important questions. Of the whole composition, of each paragraph, of each sentence, he should ask: (1) Is it unified? (2) Is it coherent? (3) Is the emphasis proper?

Structure, however, is not the only thing a composition should possess. It must possess vitality. This quality can more readily be secured—especially in the earlier grades—by assigning simple subjects from daily life, such as "My Experience with a Tramp," or "How I Should Like to Furnish My Den." Subjects, of course, are properly drawn from the literature assignment, but diligent care should be exercised that the wording of the title shall not suggest a treatment that will encourage merely bookish terms. With a first-year class, a letter from Constance at Lindesfarne to Marmion at Norham Castle will succeed; a paragraph on "The Homeric Quality in Scott" will fail. The aim is always toward vitality, and no theme can be vital until infused with interest. Furthermore, if the thought is clear, the form of the expression is likely to be clear; and the stronger emphasis should therefore rest on thought.

Perhaps most of the requirements of the teacher's task in oral and written composition will be met if the five following general suggestions are fully comprehended and carefully followed:

1. Develop a sense for form and organization.

2. Encourage a free and facile expression of the pupil's interest. Use this means to enlarge the pupil's vocabulary.

3. Develop the pupil's power to observe closely.

4. Allow the other studies in the curriculum to contribute to the composition work. Encourage all the teachers in the other departments of the school constantly to demand good written and spoken English from their pupils.

5. Criticize constructively and sympathetically—as much by personal conference as possible.

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LITERATURE

The third field that the English course designs to cultivate is literary appreciation. In developing this, the essential thing is the comprehension of the selection as a whole—its theme, its spirit, its vital reaction. As a means of securing this, special attention must be given to memory assignments; to the meanings of words, phrases, and figures; to the explanation of allusions; to the study of character; to the development of the plot; to the re-creation of sensory effects, and to the vitality of subjective reaction. All dictionary work and all analytic processes must, however, be wisely subservient to the desired end. On the pupil's way to the ultimate goal—appreciation—an over-minute consideration of detail must not cloud, a lack of consideration of detail must not impede.

In the literature work, as well as in the composition work, there should be constant insistence on accuracy. To secure this, the student must often surrender himself to severe task assignments. He will learn that the highest joy in his work comes in conquering difficulties rather than in loitering through primrose paths of dalliance. Some of the severe discipline of life may wisely be learned in the high school.

Throughout the entire English course emphasis should be laid upon memory assignments. This practice offers the student excellent mental drill and at the same time increases his working vocabulary. Its most important function, however, is the help it gives the student by equipping him with selected norms which will direct toward a more accurate judgment of things aesthetic and things spiritual. As Matthew Arnold suggests, these memorized selections may be happily used in measuring the worth of other poetry. Nor should the assignment be limited to verse form; wisely selected prose passages thoroughly memorized may secure a ready response in the learner's style. The help which memory work offers the spirit is likewise apparent. It gives the student standards of moral judgment. The course should direct toward the development of character.

Constantly the literature period allows this emphasis upon principles of conduct. Lessons in patriotism, courtesy, sincerity, the honest performance of the daily task—these may direct toward

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the highest work of the school, the development of a sterling character.

The successful following of these principles implies that the teacher of literature should be thoroughly imbued with a love of literature and an understanding of life. He should cultivate that large and sympathetic view which veers away from narrowness and directs toward the universal. He should seek constantly to store his mind with knowledge that may at will be summoned to interpret and impart the thoughts in the assigned selection. Intelligent appreciation and such a skill in imparting as will arouse the interest and enthusiasm of pupils are pedagogical requisites in efficient English teaching.

So far in this discussion of literature, I have discussed principles which are pretty generally accepted. When I attack the problem of the selection of this literary material I come to the great

> Sarbonian bog
> Betwixt Damatia and Mount Casius old,
> Where armies whole have sunk.

At the meeting of our New England Association of Teachers of English held in Boston last March, this question was freely discussed under the title, "The Differentiation of the High-School English Course." It proved so interesting that the debate was continued in the April, May, and June *Leaflets*. The main contention naturally centered around these complementary questions: Is it desirable to offer to all high-school pupils the same course in literature? Or is it wiser to discriminate and offer simpler material to the technical, commercial, and other non-college groups? Ex-President Eliot and Mr. D. O. S. Lowell of the Roxbury Latin School pled against differentiation; Deputy Commissioner Prosser and Mr. Samuel Thurber, Jr., of the Newton Technical High School pled for it.

I quote first the main portion of Mr. Lowell's argument.

For the purposes of discussion, I think we may all agree that until the high school is reached, all pupils may have the same training in English. After that time, however, I am told that there are some who would differentiate the English fare between the scholars and the toilers.

Let us suppose that we have two groups, one of each class just mentioned, at the beginning of the high-school course. Let us further suppose that all

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chaff has been carefully winnowed out after the grammar-school threshing. I believe there are at least three good reasons why the same kind of English should be taught to both scholars and toilers.

1. A differentiation would be *unnatural;* it would smack of *un*common sense. Some things are predetermined by the nature of the case. Most of us have an innate conviction, which perhaps we cannot explain, but which is no less real, that two and two are four. The case in question seems to me to be one of natural logic. Would you say that vulgar fractions are good enough for the toilers, but that the upper ten should be allowed to revel in decimals? Would you teach the scholar the geography of civilized countries only, but let the toiler content himself with deserts and jungles? Would you keep one section under blue glass, let them breathe only filtered air, and drink only distilled water from a copyrighted still? Or would you give Nature's elements to all alike, whatever their heredity, tendency, or outlook? Manifestly, the differentiation of light, water, and air for natural, normal children would be *unnatural;* but not a whit more so than to allow one of the two sections to drink deep from wells of English undefiled, but to persuade the other to slake its thirst at a tank. The best English is not too good for one who is to use the language practically rather than academically, whether as a means of daily intercourse, or as a means of occasional recreation and enjoyment in moments of stinted leisure.

2. My second objection is, that it would be *undemocratic* to differentiate and discriminate. Shall I tell the putative scholar that he has the capacity to understand Shakespeare, but compel the prospective toiler to still his dramatic yearnings by a careful perusal of George Ade? Shall I admit that the former has a right to enjoy the novels of Hawthorne, but contend that the latter would better employ his time on Rider Haggard? Shall I encourage the child of fortune to appreciate John Milton, but dole out to the child of the people the poems of Isaac Watts? I care not how you discriminate provided you *do* discriminate. What is good sauce for the goose is equally good for the gander. If caviare is a necessity on your bill of fare, distribute it to the general as well as to the particular. To relish it may demand an acquired taste, but it's better than garlic, anyway. It would be decidedly *undemocratic* to give one selection of books in English literature to pupils preparing for college and quite another selection to the prospective producers of our land. It would tend to establish an aristocracy of literature. It would give a false impression to the pupils themselves: it would tend to humiliate the one and to make vainglorious the other. And apart from all this, we should give ourselves needless trouble. We fuddle our brains even now, trying to decide which are the 100 Best Books or the 100 Worst Books for adolescents. Why should we add to our perplexities by attempting to differentiate the differentiated?

3. My third objection to a differentiation of the English course in secondary schools is that, from my point of view, it would be *unjust.* "Unjust to which section?" you may ask. Frankly, I do not know. It would be unjust to

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either if the other had something better. But you may say, "The college English would be bad for the toilers." Very possibly; but in that case it is also bad for the collegians, and ought to be reformed. Most of us teach in fitting schools. Heaven help us if we ever degenerate into cramming schools. No preparation for college should ever be a cram. That is not the way to prepare for life, and life is larger than college. We should teach, or aim to teach, many things that no examiner will ever ask, meanwhile including all that he ought to ask.

In brief, then, my objections to differentiation, as I understand the proposition, are that it would be *unnatural, undemocratic, and unjust.* Why I have those objections, I have endeavored briefly to show. In conclusion let me ask, why do we teach higher English anyway? Is the object a commercial one? I trust not. Is it merely an intellectual aim that we have in view? Again, I trust not. If our teaching and our courses do not aim higher than all that—to the culture and refinement and purification of the soul and spirit—then what we need is *not* differentiation, but conversion.

To this argument of Mr. Lowell, Mr. Thurber replied in the May *Leaflet.* I quote only in part.

Mr. Lowell's admirable and charming exposition undoubtedly expressed the deep-rooted convictions of many teachers of English. May I try to point out here why a large and increasing number of teachers feel, on the other hand, that a college-preparatory course in English is not the best course for all pupils in our modern public high schools?

I am led, first of all, to believe that there must be something really vital in this matter of "differentiation" from evidences of dissatisfaction and growing discontent which constantly come to me from technical, commercial, and industrial schools. Teachers of English in such schools as these, and in many general high schools, are evidently having a bitter struggle with the college-preparatory course which traditions and exigencies of textbooks force them to give to all their pupils. As secretary of this association I have received, during the past year, fourteen letters inquiring for information of leaflets about courses of study *other than those dependent upon college requirements.* No other phase of English teaching has brought me more than a single communication. From a school of four hundred pupils in eastern Massachusetts comes this this inquiry: "We are trying to develop a course in English which will be of more value to the pupil who will not go to college than is the course we are giving at present. . . . . Kindly inform me if you know of schools giving a course in English which is based on other requirements than those of the College Entrance Board." In a long letter a teacher in an industrial school tells of her trials and discouragements with books from "the list." She concludes with these words: "So please don't give up trying to do something for us in the industrial schools, even though college-preparatory teachers can't believe that there are boys who won't let you put one bit of classic

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literature inside 'em. . . . . Something must be done for them! What shall it be?"

Personally, I have always extended my sympathy to these correspondents, for my own experience tells me that their distress is undoubtedly well founded. Just how much, and in just what ways to differentiate, I am not prepared to say. Nevertheless, my work with commercial and technical classes has convinced me that a college-preparatory course in English is not well adapted to the needs of every boy and girl of high-school age.

At the March meeting of the association Miss Hammond said, "The necessity of differentiation in the English course of secondary schools rests on no educational theory. It is based on the indisputable fact that human aptitudes vary, environments vary, life-aims vary." Yes, and human abilities vary—among our high-school students they are varying constantly more and more—so much so that to expect that all pupils can read the same books in the same way is as absurd as it would be today to require every boy to study Latin and every girl to study higher mathematics. The books on the college list are admirable for those for whom they were planned. With them as such I have no quarrel. I have found enjoyment and profit teaching them in classes preparing for higher institutions. As a list, I believe that they cannot well be improved for English work with students who have the ability to understand and appreciate them. On the other hand, most of these same books are so far beyond the grasp of whole groups of our pupils—so completely unrelated to their reading, their experiences, their homes, and their interests—that even in the hands of patient and skilful teachers they are uninspiring, ineffective, dull.

Sixteen-year-old boys who cannot follow the story of *Ivanhoe*, or of *A Tale of Two Cities*, but who like rather well *Swiss Family Robinson* and *Tanglewood Tales* are going to give trouble when they come to Macaulay, Burke, Milton, Ruskin, and Tennyson. True it is that the teacher of English must live by faith and hope. To trust blindly, however, that a boy has in some way or other got something good into his system from studying a book which he does not understand, and which bores him unutterably, is not any form of optimism: it is mere sentimentality.

One of the premises with which Mr. Lowell opens his argument against any differentiation in the secondary-school English course runs as follows: "Let us further suppose that all chaff has been carefully winnowed out after the grammar-school threshing." Therein lies the heart of the whole problem. If we believe that it is the duty of the grades to thresh out with their flails of E's and F's and throw away as chaff all those who cannot measure up to an arbitrary and inflexible standard which we have set; if we believe that the pupil is made to fit the school—then naturally we must also believe that differentiation is unnecessary and unwise. If, on the contrary, we believe that those statistics which show that large numbers of boys and girls drop out at the end of the grammar school because the high school has nothing to offer them, are a bitter arraignment of our educational system; if we believe that the public high school is made for the pupil—then we cannot argue safely from Mr.

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Lowell's premise. To strive to reduce the "chaff" to the minimum; to be unwilling, perhaps, to admit that there is any "chaff" at all; to do very little threshing, but a great deal of fostering, adapting, and saving; to differentiate our high schools and high-school courses (including the English course) to suit the abilities, the needs, the aims of American boys and girls—this, it seems to me, is a broad and high ideal of education, and one to which the twentieth century has unquestionably brought us. Furthermore, it seems to me that any other conception of the scope and function of public secondary schools is "unnatural, undemocratic, and unjust."

After all, educational progress during the last twenty years has been largely a process of differentiation. The elective system, reduced to its simplest principles, is nothing else. Evening schools and part-time schools, technical, business, industrial, and commercial courses are only a few of the many paths into which the old classical highway of education has split up—or been "differentiated." Already in many high-school subjects—in science, in history, in the languages—differentiation according to the needs and abilities of pupils has come. Why should we not accept it and welcome it in our teaching of English?

Now if I interpret aright the drift of opinion caught from the discussion of these two adverse views, I think the tendency is toward some kind of differentiation. There will naturally be no complete departure from the prescribed list, but there will in many cases be a free selection from it and a liberal addition to it. The drift is toward a policy of school rights. The school authorities, it is asserted, should themselves be competent to select their own material and adjust their English course to their special needs.

But right here a condition comes in and rather rudely affronts our theory. Twenty per cent of our English teachers are new each year. In many schools there is no head of an English department, and there is often no superintendent or principal who is specially trained in English.

To meet these exigencies I should advocate neither the present list nor an absolutely open list. I should propose an advisory list. And I should ask the National Conference on Uniform Entrance Requirements in English to assume the framing of this list. The smaller schools are seeking light on policies and methods as well as on books, and for this the National Conference, working directly in conjunction with the National Council of Teachers of English, and indirectly with the various English associations throughout the country, should be a central guide and helper toward whom the hungry sheep may look and be abundantly fed.

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My observation has led me to assume that there is no general petition for a surrender of such examination systems as Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and Bryn Mawr are now maintaining. Provided the colleges set such questions as they have been setting recently, I see no reason why secondary teachers should object. A study of the June and September lists prepared by Harvard for students who were applying for admission under the "new plan," is the best possible proof that the university authorities have caught the spirit which pleads for wide latitude in the choice of the means by which the best results in English training are secured.

We who have been long at this work know quite well that the end to be secured in English training is power—power to express, power to interpret. We know, too, that we can develop this best if we are given that wide range of choice that allows us to select what we personally have found inspiring. We wish to eliminate entirely those selections which, despite honest and intelligent effort, have proved a drag.

In saying this we gladly pay our tribute to what the colleges and the National Conference have done for the cause of English in the schools. They have erected high ideals, they have given us splendid impetus—opened our eyes to clearer and more extended vision, bulwarked us when we were weak, made possible a longer course, and offered constant help in more effective methods of presentation. We now ask that we may be allowed to assume fully the responsibilities for which their guidance has fitted us.

Working hand in hand we can insist on further reforms. We may urge a higher minimum of English hours in the curriculum, and a lower maximum of hours for the individual English teacher; we may encourage the appointment of more supervisors of English and the employment of a more specially trained staff of instructors.

Our highest task, however, will be to direct our endeavor in our individual schools in such a way as to make the efficiency of our work react helpfully upon our pupils—such a reaction as will grant to them a more accurate and a more effective use of our native language, a keener appreciation of the splendid literature bequeathed us, and a finer and more intelligent attitude toward the conflicting affairs of human life.

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THE INFLUENCE OF THE UNIFORM ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS IN ENGLISH

A BRIEF CHAPTER OF EDUCATIONAL HISTORY, TOGETHER WITH A SUMMARY OF THE FACTS SO FAR OBTAINED BY A COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION AND A LIST OF REFERENCES

THE UNSATISFACTORY RELATIONS OF COLLEGES AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS[1]

The American high school is at present an educational storm center. Rapid readjustments are being made throughout the country, both in school and college, but nowhere else so rapidly as in the middle schools. And because the high schools are middle schools, they are influenced both from above and from below. On the one hand, they are called upon to shape their courses so as to articulate with the elementary schools, and on the other, so as to prepare young people for college. Moreover, being a public institution, the high school must respond to the pressure of opinion in the community and attempt to meet the needs and satisfy the ideals of those who support it.

The situation has been well described by ex-United States Commissioner Brown in his report for 1910. He says:

The high school indeed occupies a critical point in the center of the field, and different fires converge upon it. This is in part the reason why the high-school question is the one which reveals most clearly the change which, gradually and without observation, has been coming over our state system of educational administration, and out of which more obvious and organic changes are to come. [He states that in different portions of the country] the old-time controversy respecting the relations of public high schools to colleges and universities has been revived with more than its usual intensity. [It is freely charged by some that high schools are suffering from the dictation of the higher institutions.] Yet it is not merely a demand of the universities but a genuinely popular demand that our high schools should bridge the gap between the grammar schools and the colleges, offering to all pupils a well articulated series of educational opportunities, from the lowest to the highest. The admission requirements of the colleges have tended to hold the secondary schools up to a creditable grade of excellence, but every year the system

[1] This and the following section are taken, with certain omissions, from *English Problems*, No. 2, by James F. Hosic, published by Houghton Mifflin Co., Copyright, 1912.

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becomes more unsatisfactory, and we must look forward to a time when it can be superseded by some different arrangement, which will be as good for the colleges and better for the schools. Now that a large part of the responsibility for college preparation falls to the public high schools, it is not to be forgotten that the college and university authorities, in prescribing their entrance requirements, are in effect passing legislation for the control of public education. It is of the utmost importance that such quasi legislation should be based on a broad understanding of the position and needs of the secondary school. There are those who fear that the high school as an institutional type may fall into disfavor unless it can readily adapt itself to the new needs of the time. It can, indeed, command the present situation if it can bring together its forces on a strong, progressive program. The situation is one that calls for patience but not for inaction. There is need of active effort for improvement. Continual readjustment must be made by both school and college.

Equally positive and disquieting is the view presented by President Pritchett in the report of the Carnegie Foundation for 1910. He finds that neither colleges nor secondary schools are satisfied with their relations to each other. The college complains that the graduates of the secondary schools are superficial and unwilling to apply themselves to hard work. The secondary school complains that, although the colleges fail to train their own pupils effectively, they dominate the teaching in the lower schools so as to introduce methods unfitted to boys and girls, and by their failure to recognize the newer subjects of study, they greatly hamper the high schools in the attempt to adjust themselves to the needs of their own communities. The chief influence of the college upon the high school is to make it a cramming place for the college. Even so, a majority of the students entering by examination fail to pass the test satisfactorily, and those who do often prove very poor students afterward.

Further testimony of like nature may be found in the recent reports of the National Education Association, in the periodicals, particularly the School Review, the Outlook, and the Nation, and in recent books on the high school and on the college. It is becoming clear to all that the problem of college-entrance requirements is an educational problem of great importance, and that the solution of it will require the sincere and intelligent co-operation of teachers and administrators in both school and college.

HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH REQUIREMENTS

The course in English in the American high school is now practically determined by the reports of the Uniform Conference on College-

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Entrance Requirements in English, which meets at irregular intervals, usually once in two years. This body is made up of delegates from four associations of colleges and secondary schools, the Association of New England Colleges, and the College-Entrance Examination Board. At the last session, February 22, 1909, the membership included twelve college professors, two principals of eastern preparatory schools, and two principals of public high schools. Their report[1] includes a statement of the objects of preparation in English, suggestions as to the courses in grammar and composition and in literature, and a list of English classics, arranged in five groups, from each of which a candidate is expected to choose two for his examination upon entrance to college.

It will be recalled that the idea of a prescribed list of books originated in 1888 with the New England Commission on College-Entrance Requirements. When the Conference on English which was organized by the Committee of Ten, appointed by the National Education Association in 1892, met at Vassar College in December, it followed suit by recommending: "That the reading of certain masterpieces of English literature, not fewer in number than those at present assigned by the Commission of New England Colleges, should be required." The Conference further recommended that each of these masterpieces should be chosen to represent some period, tendency or type of literature; that the whole number of works for any year should set forth, with as few gaps as possible, the course of English literature from the Elizabethan period to the present time; that a considerable number of these works should be of a kind to be read cursorily outside of school, but that a limited number might be read under the immediate direction of the teacher; that the teachers should encourage the investigation of pertinent questions in literary history and criticism. The Conference went on record as opposed to "set essays" on the prescribed books, that is, essays merely to show that the pupil can write, and suggested that topics in literary history or criticism be chosen instead. Exercises in the correction of bad English, it declared, may do more harm than good. Admission in English should be made to depend largely upon the candidate's ability as shown in his various papers on other subjects. An examination in formal rhetoric should not be required.

The Committee of Ten clearly had in mind the practices then in vogue, particularly those of the New England colleges. Its action was followed by that of the Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools of the Middle States and Maryland. At the first meeting at Columbia

[1] See p. 115.

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College on December 1 and 2, 1893, after listening to a paper by Mr. Wilson Farrand of Newark Academy, in which, among other matters, the lack of uniformity in entrance requirements in English was deplored, the society resolved that a joint committee of ten—five representing the colleges and five the preparatory schools—be appointed to consider the current usage and present a plan of reform at the next annual meeting. These delegates met and indorsed the recommendations of the Committee of Ten. Their rephrasing of the second recommendation is interesting. "Certain of these books should be of a kind to be *read* by the candidate *as literature;* others—a *limited number*—should be *carefully studied*[1] under the immediate direction of the teacher."

To make the recommendation effective, a list of books for "reading" and a separate list for "study" were selected for each of the years 1895 to 1898 inclusive.[2]

The New England Commission of Colleges and the New England Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools were invited to send delegates to a conference with the Middle States committee in Philadelphia on May 17, 1894. Thus was born the National Conference on Uniform Entrance Requirements in English. Its present composition has been explained above.

The National Education Association again took action. William Carey Jones of the University of California read a paper at the Denver meeting in 1895 on "What Ought to Be Done to Promote the Introduction of the Programs Recommended by the Committee of Ten?" A Committee on College-Entrance Requirements, made up of twelve college professors and secondary schoolmen, was appointed. This committee, through Dr. A. F. Nightingale, its chairman, reported in July, 1899, suggestions for all the high-school subjects. The section on English is noteworthy for three reasons: first, it recommends "that literature and composition be pursued side by side throughout the entire secondary-school course, and that they be so related throughout that one shall, in so far as possible, supplement and strengthen the other"; second, it includes a detailed course of study, prepared by Mr. W. F. Webster of Minneapolis, in which the principles of composition and of esthetic criticism which the pupils should master are laid down for each of the four years of the course; third, it contains a list of thirty

[1] Italics not in the original.

[2] This list has since been changed and enlarged from time to time, at the suggestion of secondary-school teachers, but the prescription of four or five books to be "closely studied" has been maintained throughout.

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books for each of the four years, from which each teacher may choose. No attempt is made to prescribe which shall be "read" and which "studied." No doubt it was partly due to the influence of the National Education Association Committee that the National Conference was moved to adopt in 1895 and since then to extend a so-called "open list," which allows to the candidate considerable freedom of choice in the matter of books to be offered for the examination.

THE COMMITTEE OF THE ROUND TABLE

The complaints of the colleges and the work of the various committees and conferences referred to above undoubtedly had much to do with establishing the definite course in English which now everywhere continues throughout four, or at least three, of the years of the high-school period. But, as has already been indicated, dissatisfaction with this course, and especially with the examinations for entrance to college which follow it, is freely expressed. It was the discontent of the principals and teachers of certain high schools which led to the appointment of a committee to study the problem, as evidenced by the following letter:

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

ENGLISH ROUND TABLE OF THE HIGH-SCHOOL SECTION

To Principals of High Schools and Teachers of English in High Schools:

At the meeting of the English Round Table of the National Education Association, in Boston, July 1, 1910, it was decided to appoint a committee to lay before the College-Entrance Examination Board the views of the high-school principals and teachers of the country in regard to the present entrance requirements in English and the examinations set upon them. The members of that committee so far appointed are: Charles Swain Thomas, head of the Department of English in the Newton (Mass.) High School; Benjamin A. Heydrick, head of the Department of English in the High School of Commerce in New York; Henry B. Dewey, state superintendent of schools, Olympia, Washington; Edwin L. Miller, assistant principal of the Central High School, Detroit, Michigan; Mrs. Henry Hulst, head of the Department of English in the Grand Rapids (Mich.) High School; Reuben Post Halleck, principal of the Male High School, Louisville, Kentucky; Miss Fannie W. McLean, head of the Department of English in the Berkeley (Cal.) High School; and James Fleming Hosic, head of the Department of English in the Chicago Teachers College.

The purpose of the committee is to learn from those best qualified to say, whether the present system of entrance requirements and examinations in English fosters the best sort of English work in the high school, and what changes, if any, should be urged upon the College-Entrance Examination Board through its subcommittee on English and its Board of Review. The

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supreme consideration is to unite the teachers of the country in support of sound principles of secondary education, in order that boys and girls passing through high school may receive the kind of training in English best fitted to develop them and to prepare them for life.

To accomplish this purpose, it is necessary to enlist the sympathetic interest of supervisors, parents, and college examiners and instructors, as well as that of high-school teachers. It is proposed, therefore, that every association of teachers or parents in the country likely to be able to assist in reaching a consensus and decision on the questions at issue, be asked to appoint a co-operating committee, to gather evidence, direct discussion, and report conclusions to the committee of the Round Table, which shall compile and edit a final report. This central committee will report progress at the next annual meeting of the National Education Association, and hopes to complete the work within the following year.

The central committee, in order to get this work under way in a definite fashion, makes the following suggestions

TO CO-OPERATING COMMITTEES

Each co-operating committee should secure, as soon as possible, the judgment of its constituency upon the main question: *Do the college-entrance requirements in English, as at present administered, foster the best kind of English work in the high schools? If not, what changes should be made?* The results of correspondence, discussion, and conference should be formulated and placed in the hands of the central committee, together with a digest of the evidence upon which each conclusion is based.

The following questions, particularly those under 1, 2, and 3, should be carefully considered:

1. *The Influence of the Uniform College-Entrance Requirements in English upon the High School.*—

a) What is the influence of these requirements upon the high-school course in English? In what field is the influence most felt?

b) What is the influence of these requirements upon methods of teaching English in the high school?

c) What is the influence of these requirements upon the pupil's attitude toward his English work?

d) What changes, if any, would you make (1) in the high-school course in English and (2) in methods of teaching English in the high school if the problem of preparation for college were eliminated?

e) Do you offer the same courses to your college and your non-college group? Why or why not?

f) Are certain high schools affected in special ways by the entrance requirements or examinations of particular colleges? If so, specify.

2. *The High-School Course in English.*—

a) Is the following statement of the aims of the high-school course in English satisfactory? If not, how should it be modified?

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"The aim of the high-school course in grammar and composition is to develop the power of the pupil to express the ideas that come to him from the whole range of his experience. The aim of the high-school course in literature is to develop in the pupil (1) a liking for good reading and (2) the power to understand and appreciate it."

b) What principles should be followed (1) in the selection of reading for the high-school course in literature and (2) in distributing the reading throughout the course? Should the list be (1) prescribed, (2) advisory, or (3) open? Do the Uniform Requirements include too many books? too few? sufficient variety of type? Should the distinction between *reading* and *study* be dropped? What provision should be made for the study of the history of literature?

3. *Entrance to College.*—

a) Would the following specifications provide a suitable test of efficiency in English upon graduation from high school and entrance to college?

(1) A test of the pupil's power of written expression by one or more compositions on subjects suggested by the personal experience or the general information of the candidate.

(2) A test of the range and quality of the reading of the pupil and of his power of literary appreciation by means of:

(*a*) The answering of a number of simple, suggestive questions on standard texts not previously prescribed.

(*b*) The explanation of two out of three or four passages of prose or poetry of ordinary difficulty, selected from books not previously prescribed.

(3) A test of the candidate's power of oral expression by reading aloud and by conversing.

b) Should a high-school diploma be given to a pupil whose deficiencies in English are such as to prevent his being recommended for admission to college?

c) Which is preferable, certification or uniform examination for entrance to college? Why? Is there a third method, better than either?

d) How should the National Conference on College-Entrance Requirements and Examinations be constituted?

4. *References.*—

What books or articles may be cited as expressing sound views (*a*) of the present situation with regard to high-school English? (*b*) of the high-school course in English and of methods of teaching English in the high school? (Give full library reference in each case.)

5. *Additional Questions.*—

What additional matter or matters do you wish to lay before the various co-operating committees throughout the country?

Faithfully yours,

CHICAGO TEACHERS COLLEGE — JAMES FLEMING HOSIC

April 25, 1911 — *Chairman of the Committee of the Round Table*

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The time intervening between the organization of the committee and the meeting of the Round Table at San Francisco, July 12, 1911, was too short to permit of collecting material for a report. The chairman made a statement of the plan of the committee and of the problem before it under the title "The Questions at Issue." This statement was in part as follows:

At the Boston meeting last year, the English Round Table authorized the appointment of a Committee on College-Entrance Requirements in English. The action was distinctly in the nature of a protest. The committee was instructed to tell the College-Entrance Examination Board what the high-school teachers of English want. This task may have appeared to the militant creators of the committee easy, if not grateful, but it did not appear so to the members of the committee themselves. For who knows precisely what the high-school teachers of English do want? Freedom from "college domination," certainly, but beyond that a positive, constructive program in harmony with the newer conceptions of education and successfully carried out by means of intelligent co-operation. Hence the committee decided that it must first of all ascertain what the teachers of English in the high schools really do want and why they want it. It was decided to organize a main committee to be composed of members from the various sections of the country, each of whom should seek to secure co-operating committees in the associations of English teachers in his territory. A bulletin was prepared stating the purpose and plan of the committee and outlining the questions upon which a concensus is desired. It is intended that each co-operating committee shall direct the discussion of these questions at a meeting of the local association, and after due consideration shall formulate a reply. Copies of the bulletin have been sent to most of the educational journals of the country. They have also been placed in the hands of many school officers and educational leaders, including school patrons. It has been suggested that we seek the opinions of the graduates of the schools themselves. This would certainly be desirable, but it would require more time and expense than we can command.

The questions which are included in the bulletin above referred to were phrased after much conference and much careful reading of recent educational literature. Representatives of both school and college have been very outspoken of late, and they have set forth their views on the questions which are now before us with definiteness and vigor. Many high-school principals and teachers declare that the influence of the entrance requirements in English is bad. They say that the legitimate aims and work of the high school are interfered with and that some method of entrance to college must be devised which will not only not hinder but positively help the high school in performing its task. Let us briefly review the controversy and attempt to define the issues more exactly.

The problem of the articulation of the high school with the college is a

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natural result of our educational development. It has arisen from the overlapping of the older system of endowed colleges, with their self-developed preparatory schools, and the newer system of public high schools and universities, organized and supported by the state. The academy was not originally but soon became a preparatory school. The public high school, on the other hand, is intended to provide an increased opportunity of education for the children of the people. With the development of the state universities, it has come to be thought of as the necessary stepping-stone from the elementary school to the college of liberal arts, the college of science, or the professional and technical school. There has been a tendency on the part of the university to regard the public high school as mainly preparatory to itself, and the university sometimes makes excessive demands upon the high school. Since both are chiefly concerned with preparing citizens for effective service, the university can rightly ask only that the high school do well what it feels obliged to undertake. As a matter of fact, the state universities do at present accept for entrance credit practically all the courses which the high schools give.

It should be noted, also, that the state universities some years ago substituted a system of inspection and accrediting of schools for the older system of entrance examinations. By this plan, graduates of high schools of standard grade are admitted to the universities on a certificate signed by the principal. This arrangement has been generally accepted by the endowed colleges and universities, especially in the middle and western states, and seems to give much satisfaction. It has not, however, escaped criticism. We hear of "domination" of high schools by these higher institutions which accept certificates, and it is charged in some quarters that the system prevents the establishing of a high standard of scholarship in the colleges and universities. It has, at all events, brought about such cordial relations between the higher schools and the secondary schools that sympathetic co-operation in working out common problems is now general, and the necessity for freedom on the part of the high school to adjust itself to new demands seems to be clearly recognized.

Meanwhile, many of the children of the people have been making use of the public high school as their place of preparation for our older endowed colleges and universities, and "thereby hangs a tale." For these colleges were organized to give a certain type of education, and they still regard themselves as having functions distinctly different from those of the colleges supported by the state. They have been exceedingly conservative in maintaining the traditional view as to what constitutes a higher or liberal education and have felt justified in demanding that any person who may seek to take their courses shall have prepared himself in a particular way, so that he may exactly fit into their scheme and continue his studies with a proper appreciation of them. True, most of these institutions have an elective system, but, nevertheless, the undergraduate work is so planned as practically to determine what the student's preparatory course must be. Now since it is both undesirable and impracticable to give in the high school two sets of courses, one for

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those who wish to go to college and one for those who do not, it comes about that the presence of a few pupils preparing for college largely determines what course all shall pursue. Indeed, the effect is often so marked as to transform the last year into a year of review and preparation for examinations, frequently the particular examinations set by certain colleges differing widely among themselves. For the high-school teacher, a graduate of one of these colleges, takes a natural pride in the number of his pupils who pass entrance examinations creditably, and he gets into the habit of measuring his success as a teacher by this standard. In this way, as many think, the high school is turned aside from its legitimate uses.

The problem of articulation is complicated by the fact that many colleges which admit by examination do not utilize the College-Entrance Examination Board, but set up instead special requirements. Some states, moreover, have very definite systems of high-school supervision and prescribe courses and set examinations for the high-school diploma. In many cases pupils about to leave high school have their minds centered upon the coming examinations. The inevitable tendency of such a situation is to transform a high school into a cram school. Teachers do not teach, they prepare for examination. Pupils do not study to learn but to pass tests. Such a condition is intolerable. It is opposed to good sense and constitutes a breach of faith with the public which supports the schools. The individual school is robbed of its freedom, the teacher of initiative, and the pupils of true educational influence.

Various solutions of the problem are urged. Many think the difficulty would be removed if the colleges would examine schools instead of pupils. The essence of this plan is supervision of the high schools by the universities. A standard high-school course is arranged, specific requirements in the various subjects are made out, definite units of credit are assigned, the various high schools are rated, or, as it is called, accredited, and an inspector is appointed to visit the high schools from time to time and ascertain whether the equipment, course of study, and teaching staff are adequate and actually turning out good work. The inspector offers advice and encouragement, points out weak spots, and, in general, assists the schools in standardizing themselves. Not all boys and girls, however, can be made efficient even by the best high school, and, consequently, the colleges which accept students on certificate must and do receive many who are ill-prepared for any sort of college work. The result would seem inevitably to be a lowering of the tone of the college and a depreciation in its standards. At any rate, the point is urged with some warmth by the colleges which cling to the entrance examination.

The fact is that we have many colleges supported by private means which were never intended to educate the children of all the people. They were founded more or less in accordance with the English ideal, and their aims have been intellectual culture and preparation for the speaking and reading professions. These colleges say that they have a right to choose what sort of education they will offer and, therefore, what sort of preparation for their work they

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will demand. We want, say these colleges, only the pick of the high-school graduates, and we do not regard the newer high-school subjects, commercial and vocational work particularly, as well fitted to develop intellectual culture; and, therefore, we wish those who come to us to have studied languages, mathematics, science, and history. Their position is, of course, the traditional one and the burden of proof lies on the advocates of the new.

So long as the older colleges got all the students they wanted, they felt their position to be secure, but with the rise of state-supported colleges has come a competition that must be met. The older institutions find themselves at the parting of the ways. Either they must be small and select or they must articulate freely with the high schools. Some are content to be small and select; others are willing to reform. Harvard has recently arranged a new system of entrance. The University of Chicago has just announced a still more liberal plan, and beyond doubt others will follow.

In view of these advance steps on the part of the greatest of the endowed universities, it requires no prophet to foretell the coming of entire freedom to the high schools to work out their own destiny. Liberty is at hand, what shall we do with it? The mere liberalizing or removal of the entrance requirements will certainly not solve all the problems of high-school English. Was it not mainly the uncertainties and vagaries of the high schools themselves which made an attempt at uniform requirements necessary? And have not the colleges justly complained that an appeal to the high schools for help in framing their requirements, raised such a discord of voices that the colleges were obliged to decide for themselves what was best to do? In fact, do we not owe it to the colleges that we have a high-school course in English at all? The high schools do not even yet know their own minds in this matter. Only here and there do you find a high school in which a thoroly practical, consistent, progressive course in English is carried out with an eye single to the individual and social life of the boys and girls. There is altogether too much consciousness of the college lecture-room, past and future, altogether too much high-flown criticism, pedantic reference-hunting, and attempt at literary composition. Our exercises have been too isolated, too motiveless, and too formal. We have failed to teach the simple, correct English, particularly the spoken English, of everyday life.

It is to be hoped that when the work of the committee is complete and the experience of the various sections of the country is brought together and made available for all of us, that there will appear some definite lines of progress upon which we may move out. Nothing can be of more importance to our pupils than that they secure a perfect mastery of the mother-tongue, and the task of discovering how to give it to them is our task, the task of the English teachers of America.

THE CONSENSUS SO FAR OBTAINED

The committee has received replies to some or all of its questions from over seven hundred persons, acting either as individuals or

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collectively. The 225 teachers of English in the high schools of New York City, for example, sent a unanimous report condemning the present requirements and examinations. The English section of the State Teachers Association of Illinois, and the associations in Nevada took similar action. As nearly as can be determined, these persons are identified as follows; high-school teachers, 694; normal-school teachers, 13; teachers of English or of education in the colleges, 20; principals and superintendents in towns and cities, 44; state inspectors and state superintendents of public instruction, 13. The distribution is as follows: New England, 35; Middle States, 282; South, 31; North Central, 295; West, 42. Both larger and smaller public high schools are represented, but, unfortunately, few private schools have been heard from. It is certainly desirable that their views should be known.

As usual, the answers to the questions sent out by the committee fall into three classes, radical, moderate, and conservative. All sections of the country are about equally represented in each class, but the conservatives are greatly outnumbered. Comparatively few say that they consider the influence of the Uniform Requirements entirely helpful. Many are grateful for the emphasis upon English work which the colleges have helped to establish, but most feel that it is time to go forward. With increasing knowledge of the nature of the pupils and of the character of the results actually obtained, the high schools themselves must work out progressive courses in English, wisely adapted to varying needs.

Representative opinions concerning the influence of the requirements upon the course are as follows: "have good influence" (seven schools); "unify the course" (five schools); "give definiteness" (four schools); "set a high standard" (four schools); "determine the course" (six schools—nearly all assume that they do); "force use of unsuitable material, hamper, restrict" (fifty-two schools); "emphasize the unessential," "deadening," "pernicious," "call for memory instead of thinking" (several others). As to the influence upon methods of teaching, about one-fourth of the answers are favorable: "more systematic and thorough," "guide inexperienced teachers," "establish uniformity," "co-ordinate literature and composition" are among the phrases used. Several say that methods are not influenced at all; the large majority find something to deplore. "The requirements prevent freedom and individuality," "hinder adapting the work to the pupils," "cause mechanical work," "overemphasize analysis and collecting of facts at the expense of appreciation and of ethical appeal," "institute cramming for examination, college methods, technical study." It seems evident that a large

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number of teachers feel the Uniform Requirements to be, for one reason or another, a positive hindrance to effective teaching. As to the influence on the pupils, a respectable minority find it wholesome: "Importance is lent to the work," "the compositions are better," "the reading is better." A few think the influence is confined to the fourth year of the course. A large number can detect no influence, while very many discover "dislike," "indifference," "wrong conception of literature as a mere task," "looking only to getting to college," and "loss of interest on the part of the non-college group." Some complain that the pupils are overburdened, and a number say that the influence of the requirements depends upon the attitude of the teacher.

Six high schools would make no change in the English course if the college requirements were eliminated; they are satisfied with them. One says, "no change for *Western* colleges." Several declare that they pay no attention to the requirements. Inspection of their courses shows, however, that they do use most of the books on the list. The main body come out strongly for reform. They urge more composition, especially oral composition, more use of subjects from the life experiences of the pupils in place of those from books, more emphasis on "fundamentals." The literature course, they say, should be more flexible, better adapted to the needs, interests, and capacities of boys and girls; more modern books should be read; the work should aim at appreciation, not at information and technical analysis in preparation for an examination; the work of the last two years is too abstruse and too exacting; American literature is neglected; there is no progress from year to year. The earnestness of these protests is unmistakable. A large number of the writers feel and feel deeply the unwisdom of sacrificing the possibilities of growth in taste and in character on the part of boys and girls for the convenience of college examiners, or a mistaken pride in turning out successful candidates. It is difficult to see how tradition, no matter how strongly intrenched, can stand long in the way of reorganization.

Most schools make no distinction between those who are going to college and those who are not, but give the same training in English to all. A few provide special drills in the fourth year to meet college demands, and several schools offer special courses in preparation for business. Very few complain of the influence of a particular college, though it is evident from the answers that certain higher institutions in various parts of the country do exert a powerful influence on the schools near them.

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The aim of the high-school course, as stated in the circular, was pronounced satisfactory by nearly all. A few would add such words as clearly, easily, and effectively after "express" in the statement concerning grammar and composition, and a much larger number would include "ethical training," "enlarge the view of life," "raise standards of conduct," and similar purposes in the aim of literature.

The answers as to the selection and distribution of literature are exceedingly difficult to summarize. There is no agreement here, and it is evident that the Uniform Requirements have not thrown much light on the problem. The principle most frequently suggested is that the literature should be adapted to the interests and capacities of the pupils and should grow more difficult as he advances. Others would "include a variety of types," "illustrate the development of English literature," "choose representative authors," "illustrate the forms of discourse," "correlate with composition," "cause world classics to be read in school and modern authors outside," "assign certain books for study and others for home reading," "both satisfy tastes and create them." Some would teach American literature in the first two years and English literature in the last two. Others say, "from the objective to the subjective," "story first and subtler poetry and essays last," "follow chronological order," "include a variety of form according to maturity in each year," etc. No doubt there should be considerable flexibility of choice and arrangement, but it is hard to escape the conviction that the high-school course in literature presents an educational question that has not received adequate study from anybody.

There is great difference of opinion also as to the lists. The conservative minority wish them prescribed or partly prescribed and partly advisory. A few suggest the prescription of types. Many choose open lists or no lists at all. But by far the larger number declare for advisory lists arranged by some authoritative body. Almost no one seems to think the present list entirely satisfactory, the principal objection being that the books are not sufficiently varied to meet the needs of all classes. It is urged by some that more modern short stories and more selections by American authors be included. Several find Milton too remote from the interests of their classes. Few definite suggestions are made, however, and it seems evident that little experimental work has been done to determine what books are best suited to high-school pupils.

The majority would retain the distinction between *reading* and *study*, though it is clear that the question was not understood to refer to the application of these terms which is made by the Uniform Confer-

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ence. To require both class study and rapid outside reading throughout the four years is apparently the rule. The vote means, then, that most would have both intensive and extensive reading. It may fairly be inferred from the other answers that the majority are opposed to the setting apart of a few books to be studied in the fourth year in preparation for a college examination.

Nearly all would make provision for the history of literature, but, as already indicated, there is lack of agreement as to what the provision should be. The following suggestions are made: "talks"; "a light requirement"; "a comprehensive glance somewhere in the course"; "distribute through the four years"; "a separate elective course"; "with a textbook in a definite course"; "in the second year"; "in the fourth year"; "by periods as a setting for the authors"; "a text with reading of selections"; "in the history course"; "subordinate to the classics." Here is another educational problem for solution.

The test for entrance to college suggested in the circular met with strong approval, except as to "conversing." Several feel that the pupil would be too much embarrassed to do himself justice. A very few prefer examination on prescribed books, and others suggest partial certification. But the overwhelming majority prefer certification to any sort of examination for entrance to college, for the reason that examinations do not examine and that the effect of them upon the schools is bad. With the best intentions in the world, college professors are unable to set examinations adapted to high-school boys and girls, and so long as there are examinations to be passed so long pupils will be coached to pass them, to the infinite detriment of natural, healthy interest in the subject for its own sake.

Many would, under certain conditions, give a high-school diploma to a pupil they would not recommend to college. They propose, however, various methods of guarding the practice, and they would treat such cases as exceptional.

The National Conference on English Requirements should be made up of college and high-school representatives in equal number, say most of the writers. A few add "from all localities." Several declare boldly that the high schools should be free to determine their own courses, and one or two suggest the advisability of including teachers of subjects other than English.

Two additional topics of great importance were brought forward. The first is that of co-operation among all the teachers of a school in securing good English. The other is that of the organization of the

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elementary course in English and the high-school course in English into one unified, coherent whole. These are subjects to be pressed upon the attention of the National Council of Teachers of English, however, rather than upon that of the National Conference on Uniform Requirements.

A few letters from well-known students of current educational problems will serve to supplement the principal facts set forth above.

Two professors of education write:

"I believe that college-entrance requirements in English are having a very definite influence upon the high-school work. The State University requirements in English have entirely remodeled the curriculum of high-school English in this state during the last ten years. I think that as much has been accomplished as is possible by merely stating years and books. The next step that our colleges and normal schools must take is to indicate in much more detail the method of carrying on the work. Many teachers are trying to follow the entrance requirements but are doing it in a mechanical fashion. As a result, many of our boys and girls finish the high school with a repugnance for reading good literature, and with utter inability to write decent English. I receive about two hundred new students each year in my department, and I find many of them very poorly equipped for writing their everyday ideas, and for expressing the ideas with which they deal in my own subject. I presume that they could define figures of speech, write rules for capitalization and punctuation, but when it comes to expressing their ideas in clear terse English many of them utterly fail. They also fail in punctuation.

"The failure of pupils to gain a love for good literature is due in a large measure to the lack of adaptation of the reading matter to the ages and individual aptitude of the different pupils. Most of the English work is in the hands of women, who frequently, very usually, do not understand boy nature. I have one boy in the high school who is deeply interested in mechanics, out-of-door sports, and woodcraft. He draws from our city library and the university library scores of books every year upon those subjects. His teacher of English, a woman, keeps him after school frequently to learn stereotyped definitions of words and figures of speech, and to urge him to learn the traditional literature properly. If she could only meet the boy upon his own footing, she would have no difficulty in enlisting his interest and in securing satisfactory results.

"Similar difficulties arise in the composition work. Most of the composition exercises are ill-adapted to the interests and capacities of the children. They are given all sorts of formal composition exercises in which they have little interest, but they are allowed to make slip-shod statements in their everyday expressions, and little attention is given to the composition in the history class, the mathematics class, or the physics class. Why could the composition work not be more closely related to the other subjects? Tons of effort are expended by teachers in trying to make pupils into short-story writers

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and authors. Much less time and energy spent in helping them to express themselves simply yet accurately on everyday matters would be much more effective."

"I am convinced that the teaching of grammar, rhetoric, and composition in the high school is too formal; it consists too much in the learning of definitions, rules, and formulae, with illustrations more or less remote from the pupil's interests and everyday expression. The purpose which many instructors seem to keep in mind is to have the pupil acquire a theoretical knowledge in these fields, rather than to have him gain facility in the employment of effective modes of expression. It seems to me that the pupil is required to learn conventional matters rather than to acquire a feeling for the best forms in current usage. The work of the school is too far removed from the actual linguistic needs of everyday life. This results in alienating the affections of many pupils for all work in grammar, rhetoric, and composition. It is probable that the majority of pupils would vote that these were the most distasteful subjects in the whole high-school course.

"I do not think that the requirements in English for entrance to college work are entirely responsible for the formal character of instruction in the high school. Undoubtedly they have put a premium upon mere verbal learning, though I believe there is much less emphasis upon that sort of thing now than there was a few years ago. But even if the colleges would accept anything which the high schools would present, it is probable that the work would still be more or less formal and remote, until instructors gain the view that the object of these branches is not to acquire theoretical knowledge so much as to gain facility in the use of modes of expression that are appropriate to the everyday needs of the pupil. If instructors would be governed by this latter conception, their work would be based less upon formal textbooks than is now the case in most places.

"In respect to the teaching of literature I am convinced there is too great formalism here also. According to my observation, pupils are still required to memorize what some analyst or critic says about the character and values of the English classics. It is undoubtedly worth while for high-school students to analyze English masterpieces; but it seems to me to be worthless to memorize what other people say about the qualities of any work or selection which is written. It is probable that if pupils were not examined upon these formal matters, instructors would not feel the necessity of insisting upon them in their teaching."

From the principal of one of the best of the Eastern high schools:

"It seems to me that so far as examinations are required by the colleges they should be examinations for power rather than for definite information. I think that the specific nature of college-entrance examinations has greatly

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hampered the English work in the high school. Instead of testing the pupils as to their ability to read, to write, and to speak good English, the college examinations have emphasized the candidates' information concerning a large number of things that are not essential. They have specified exactly what literature was to be read, and designated so closely just what was to be done with this literature that all individuality has been ground out of the teachers.

"If I felt that we could trust the colleges to handle the matter in a common-sense way, I should say that it would be well for them to require an examination testing the pupils' ability to read and interpret English of the grade, say, of Macaulay's Essays, or of Tennyson's Idylls, or of the less difficult plays of Shakespeare; that they should require the pupil to be able to write an account of his own experiences in straightforward, idiomatic English, practically free from rhetorical and grammatical errors, and that he should be able to carry on an intelligent conversation on the topics of the day without exposing any ridiculous defects in his speech, either in construction or in expression. The colleges, however, are so largely manned by young Ph.D.'s who have taken their degrees on such subjects as the rhythmic recurrence of "or" in Shakespeare's plays of the middle period, that I fear we shall not get any large educational treatment of our pupils from them.

"Personally, I think the time is not far distant when the colleges will take graduates from a four years' high-school course on the recommendation of the principal. I should much rather trust the high-school principals than the colleges in these matters, for it will be some time before the colleges get away from the idea that an education means a certain quantum of information in the hierarchy of subjects."

The superintendent of public instruction in an Eastern state:

"I have often wondered, whether it would be desirable to give separate consideration to the teaching of English as expression and the teaching of English for appreciation—in other words, composition and literature, including under the first oral expression. I have a conviction that the greatest source of confusion in English teaching at the present time is the attempt to teach largely by the same methods these two different types of work, which, in my estimation, rest on essentially different pedagogical necessities. I would even go so far as to say, as a result of observation, that in the ordinary secondary school and college, separate teachers should, wherever possible, be had for literature on the one hand, considered mainly from the standpoint of appreciation, and formal English, meaning thereby largely expression and analytical study of some literary products, on the other."

From neighboring colleges, also in the East:

"Constant agitation of changes in the English entrance requirements tends to cause uncertainty to preparatory school teachers. The new requirements set by the conference of 1909 have not yet gone into effect. Until they receive

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a fair test it seems inadvisable to reopen the entire subject. The new requirements seem to us sufficiently flexible to meet the demands of teachers for variety.

"The oral test suggested in 3*a* (3) is impracticable with us, owing to the very large number of candidates examined. To the following question, whether a high-school diploma should be given to a pupil whose deficiencies in English are such as to prevent his being recommended for admission to college, we should answer decidedly, No. We prefer entrance examinations to certification because they seem to us to afford more convincing proof as to the candidate's ability. The recommendation of the preparatory-school teachers may be helpful as collateral evidence, but we think a man should be able to meet such college tests as we give. We have for some time been setting some topics of a general nature for composition."

"The college-entrance requirements in English, as at present administered, do not foster the best kind of English work in the high schools.

"1. *a*) They limit the high-school course to readings which may be good for one school, and may be bad for another school with different problems.

"*b*) They inevitably oblige most of the high-school teachers to prepare pupils for examination, rather than to give them the best training. When the uniform entrance requirements were first proposed, nobody expected this result.

"*c*) I believe that most pupils write literary appreciations which they think will be acceptable, rather than their own opinion of the books read.

"*d*) In my judgment the high-school course in English should include English grammar, practical composition work, the history of English literature, and a considerable amount of reading. One of the chief evils of the present system seems to me to be that practically every book put into the hands of the pupil is a textbook. When I first read *Pilgrim's Progress*, I read it as a book, not as a school text, with annotations and questions. I feel sure that the reduction of every piece of English literature which is put into the hands of a high-school pupil to a school text is decidedly injurious to an appreciation of literature.

"The methods should be left to the school. Results are all that the colleges ask.

"2. *a*) 'The whole range of his experience' seems to me unsatisfactory. I remember well that, at the age of sixteen, I had very little experience. I should, nevertheless, have resented certain subjects for composition which I have seen proposed. No boy should be compelled to put on paper his private and personal feelings.

"I have no objection to (1) and (2), though I believe that ability to write is the first requisite.

"*b*) In my opinion, uniform requirements are an absurdity. For examination purposes, the distinction between reading and study should be dropped.

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I believe that, in teaching literature, some books or essays should be exhaustively studied, and others read for general effect.

"Some elementary history of English literature ought to be thoroughly mastered. High-school graduates should know the names of our great writers and the names of their principal works.

"3. A good composition and a statement of reading done would satisfy me, as an entrance requirement. I do not believe that literary 'appreciation' is a proper test. Under the conditions of admission examinations, I do not think that oral tests are fair to the pupils. Nervousness might debar many."

CONCLUSION

It is clear that there is little or no difference of opinion on some of the points involved in the investigation. The lists of books which are published from time to time by the National Conference practically determine the choice of classics for the high-school course. The use of them varies. The nearer the school to an examining College the more rigidly the teachers adhere to the list and the more technical and detailed is the study required. Schools which send graduates mainly to accrediting institutions, on the other hand, frequently regard the lists as merely suggestive and seem to feel free to choose books and adapt teaching to the class in hand. It is the examination, and particularly the kind of examination set, which is objected to by the schools. Many teachers declare a preference for examination as opposed to certification for college entrance, but they almost invariably stipulate that the examination shall be more liberal than at present. It is evident, also, that the emphasis upon literature in the reports of the Conference has circumscribed the composition work of the schools. Many teachers feel that, at present, literary composition receives proportionally too much attention and that the forms of expression in use in daily life, particularly the oral forms, are being neglected. This is due, in part, to the demand for more or less exact knowledge of the form and content of the books prescribed and, in part, to the failure of school authorities to provide adequately, either in teachers or in equipment, for the teaching of composition. It may be necessary to separate the course in composition from the course in literature, as several have suggested, in order to bring about needed reforms.

It was the intention of those who created the Committee on Entrance Requirements that a report of its findings should be laid before the National Conference at the earliest opportunity. The Conference, on its part, has invited the committee to send representatives to the meeting of February 22 to present the facts obtained. This will be done. It

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has seemed proper, however, to publish a summary of the replies to the circular letter in order that all may know what progress has been made and also that the consensus may become much more complete. If all who see this article will send a statement of their views to the committee at once and will induce others to do so, the final report can be made what it ought to be—an authoritative document on the subject. It is hoped that a report signed by all members of the committee can be presented to the Round Table for its approval at the meeting of the National Education Association in July, and afterward published for general distribution. For whatever errors there may be in the present summary, the chairman alone is responsible.

For the convenience of those who may wish to consider the subject, the latest report of the National Conference on Uniform Entrance Requirements in English is here appended, together with a short list of references.

The Conference voted that the following requirement for the years 1913, 1914, and 1915 should be recommended to the constituent bodies for adoption.

Preparation in English has two main objects: (1) command of correct and clear English, spoken and written; (2) ability to read with accuracy, intelligence, and appreciation.

ENGLISH GRAMMAR AND COMPOSITION

The first object requires instruction in grammar and composition. English grammar should ordinarily be reviewed in the secondary school; and correct spelling and grammatical accuracy should be rigorously exacted in connection with all written work during the four years. The principles of English composition governing punctuation, the use of words, paragraphs, and the different kinds of whole composition, including letter-writing, should be thoroughly mastered; and practice in composition, oral as well as written, should extend throughout the secondary-school period. Written exercises may well comprise narration, description, and easy exposition and argument based upon simple outlines. It is advisable that subjects for this work be taken from the student's personal experience, general knowledge, and studies other than English, as well as from his reading in literature. Finally, special instruction in language and composition should be accompanied by concerted effort of teachers in all branches to cultivate in the student the habit of using good English in his recitations and various exercises, whether oral or written.

LITERATURE

The second object is sought by means of two lists of books, headed respectively *reading* and *study*, from which may be framed a progressive course in literature covering four years. In connection with both lists, the student

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should be trained in reading aloud and be encouraged to commit to memory some of the more notable passages both in verse and in prose. As an aid to literary appreciation, he is further advised to acquaint himself with the most important facts in the lives of the authors whose works he reads and with their place in literary history.

a) Reading.—The aim of this course is to foster in the student the habit of intelligent reading and to develop a taste for good literature, by giving him a first-hand knowledge of some of its best specimens. He should read the books carefully, but his attention should not be so fixed upon details that he fails to appreciate the main purpose and charm of what he reads.

With a view to large freedom of choice, the books provided for reading are arranged in the following groups, from which at least ten units[1] are to be selected, two from each group:

I. The Old Testament, comprising at least the chief narrative passages in Genesis, Exodus, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, and Daniel, together with the books of Ruth and Esther; the *Odyssey*, with the omission, if desired, of Books I, II, III, IV, V, XV, XVI, XVII; the *Iliad*, with the omission, if desired, of Books XI, XIII, XIV, XV, XVII, XXI; Virgil's *Aeneid*. The *Odyssey*, *Iliad*, and *Aeneid* should be read in English translations of recognized literary excellence.

For any unit of this group a unit from any other group may be substituted.

II. Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice; Midsummer Night's Dream; As You Like It; Twelfth Night; Henry the Fifth; Julius Caesar.*

III. Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, Part I; Goldsmith's *Vicar of Wakefield;* either Scott's *Ivanhoe*, or Scott's *Quentin Durward;* Hawthorne's *House of Seven Gables;* either Dickens' *David Copperfield*, or Dickens' *Tale of Two Cities;* Thackeray's *Henry Esmond;* Mrs. Gaskell's *Cranford;* George Eliot's *Silas Marner;* Stevenson's *Treasure Island.*

IV. Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Part I; The "Sir Roger de Coverley Papers" in the *Spectator;* Franklin's *Autobiography* (condensed); Irving's *Sketch Book;* Macaulay's *Essays on Lord Clive* and *Warren Hastings;* Thackerays' *English Humorists; Selections* from Lincoln, including at least the two Inaugurals, the Speeches in Independence Hall and at Gettysburg, the Last Public Address, and Letter to Horace Greeley, along with a brief memoir or estimate; Parkman's *Oregon Trail;* either Thoreau's *Walden*, or Huxley's *Autobiography* and selections from *Lay Sermons*, including the addresses on "Improving Natural Knowledge," "A Liberal Education," and "A Piece of Chalk"; Stevenson's *Inland Voyage* and *Travels with a Donkey.*

V. Palgrave's *Golden Treasury* (first series), Books II and III, with especial attention to Dryden, Collins, Gray, Cowper, and Burns; Gray's "Elegy in a Country Churchyard" and Goldsmith's *Deserted Village;* Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner* and Lowell's *Vision of Sir Launfal;* Scott's *Lady of the Lake;* Byron's

[1] Each unit is set off by semicolons.

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Childe Harold, Canto IV, and *Prisoner of Chillon;* Palgrave's *Golden Treasury* (first series), Book IV, with especial attention to Wordsworth, Keats, and Shelley; Poe's "Raven," Longfellow's *Courtship of Miles Standish*, and Whittier's *Snow-Bound;* Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome* and Arnold's *Sohrab and Rustum;* Tennyson's *Gareth and Lynette*, *Lancelot and Elaine*, and *The Passing of Arthur;* Browning's "Cavalier Tunes," "The Lost Leader," "How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix," "Home Thoughts from Abroad," "Home Thoughts from the Sea," "Incident of the French Camp," "Hervé Riel," "Pheidippides," "My Last Duchess," "Up at a Villa —Down in the City."

b) *Study.*—This part of the requirement is intended as a natural and logical continuation of the student's earlier reading, with greater stress laid upon form and style, the exact meaning of words and phrases, and the understanding of allusions. For this close reading are provided a play, a group of poems, an oration, and an essay, as follows:

Shakespeare's *Macbeth;* Milton's *L'Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, and *Comus;* either Burke's *Speech on Conciliation with America*, or both Washington's *Farewell Address* and Webster's *First Bunker Hill Oration;* either Macaulay's *Life of Johnson*, or Carlyle's *Essay on Burns*.

EXAMINATION

However accurate in subject-matter, no paper will be considered satisfactory if seriously defective in punctuation, spelling, or other essentials of good usage.

The examination will be divided into two parts, one of which may be taken as a preliminary, and the other as a final.

The first part of the examination will be upon ten units chosen, in accordance with the plan described earlier, from the lists headed *reading;* and it may include also questions upon grammar and the simpler principles of rhetoric, and a short composition upon some topic drawn from the student's general knowledge or experience. On the books prescribed for reading, the form of the examination will usually be the writing of short paragraphs on several topics which the candidate may choose out of a considerable number. These topics will involve such knowledge and appreciation of plot, character-development, and other qualities of style and treatment as may be fairly expected of boys and girls. In grammar and rhetoric, the candidate may be asked specific questions upon the practical essentials of these studies, such as the relation of the various parts of a sentence to one another, the construction of individual words in a sentence of reasonable difficulty, and those good usages of modern English which one should know in distinction from current errors.

The second part of the examination will include composition and those books comprised in the list headed *study*. The test in composition will consist of one or more essays, developing a theme through several paragraphs;

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the subjects will be drawn from the books prescribed for *study*, from the candidate's other studies, and from his personal knowledge and experiences quite apart from reading. For this purpose the examiner will provide several subjects, perhaps five or six, from which the candidate may make his own selections. The test on the books prescribed for study will consist of questions upon their content, form, and structure, and upon the meaning of such words, phrases, and allusions as may be necessary to an understanding of the works and appreciation of their salient qualities of style. General questions may also be asked concerning the lives of the authors, their other works, and the periods of literary history to which they belong.

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[1] The following abbreviations are used: *Ed.* (*Education*); *Ed. Bi.* (*Educational Bi-monthly*); *Ed. Rev.* (*Educational Review*); *Eng. Jour.* (*English Journal*); *Proc. N.E.A.* (*Proceedings of the National Education Association*); *Sch. Rev.* (*School Review*).

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EDITORIAL

A NEW FABLE OF BIDPAI

In one of the fables of Bidpai that has somehow escaped the diligence of the translator, we are told how once a young sandpiper was sent by its parents to the great college of birds in the Forest of Childar to learn the art of nidification. Arriving at the edge of the forest, the fledgling was presently halted by a brisk young woodpecker, but little older than himself, who let it be known that he was the college examiner. "And we will soon discover," said he, "whether you are so grounded in the essentials of nidification as to be ready for admission to this venerable forest."

"My tutors," began the sandpiper—

"Are doubtless very pretty fellows as sandpipers go," interrupted the woodpecker. "But I do not know them, and, pardon me, I do not care to know them. So we will proceed to the test. And first you may answer me this: Out of all the trees in this forest, which one would you select as most suitable for a nest, taking into account, of course, accessibility to destructive animals, vertical and lateral movement of the boughs, remoteness from food-supply, and particularly the grade and variety of ornithological environment." To this question the candidate replied humbly that in the country he came from trees were unknown. "What? No trees!" screamed the woodpecker. "Where, then, do you wretched birdlings nest?" "Why," returned the sandpiper, "we build our nests hard by the breakers in the yellow sands. They are not so lofty as your tree nests, nor so beautiful, but we sandpipers have always built them so, and we like them as they are. "Dear me," said the woodpecker fretfully. "Here's a nice beginning. No trees! Why, half my questions are about trees. How do you suppose I am to examine such a blockhead? Well, well, we must get on somehow. Perhaps you can tell me how many straws there are in the nest of the great auk." "Indeed, I cannot," replied the sandpiper. "I never had a chance to count them." "Nor anybody else, you little

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fool," cried the woodpecker, "for the great auk lays its egg on the bare rock and makes no nest at all. And now if that is all you know about the great art of nest-building, you will see that we cannot admit you to the forest." "But," pleaded the sandpiper, "You have not asked me about the nests that I am acquainted with—the nests that are built on the sands and in the fens and marshes. These nests I know and love. I have visited hundreds, and watched them in building, and I can tell you all about them." "That may be," replied the woodpecker, yawning, "but I am not interested in these inferior sorts of nests myself. Besides, as I hear a worm moving under the bark, I shall soon be too busy to make out a proper set of questions. So run along home and tell your people that if they mean to send their young ones to this college, they will do well to build their nests in boughs hereafter, or, better, bore holes in trees as we woodpeckers do." So saying he broke off the examination.

As for the young sandpiper, after a few unavailing tears, he withdrew and sought the advice of a wise owl in a tree just outside the forest, who in a few hours instructed him so adroitly in the favorite questions and answers of the woodpecker, that on the very next day he was admitted to the forest with the highest honors.

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NEWS AND NOTES

THE LOUISVILLE ASSOCIATION JOINS THE NATIONAL COUNCIL

The Association of English Teachers of Louisville met on December 11 to hear the report of the first meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English, given by Miss Elizabeth Graeme Barbour and Miss Sally Maury of the English Department of the Girls' High School. The Louisville Association heartily indorsed the action of the Council and moved that application for collective membership be made promptly.

With regard to the "Open Letter" of the New York Association, they too, deplored the training which produces "examinable minds," but believed that an "examination for power" is consonant with the present college-entrance requirements. As to the requirements themselves, the distinction between study and reading should be retained; study, since the inexperienced teacher needs such guidance, and the pupil cannot be supplied with any better literature than the masterpieces and certainly should not be offered less than the best; reading, so that the list may be elastic enough to suit all tastes. The general opinion was that the college-entrance requirements are not the difficulty in the present English situation. The difficulty lies in the lack of thorough training in the technique of writing, which training cannot be satisfactory until the numbers in the classes are greatly reduced.

ELIZABETH GRAEME BARBOUR

LOUISVILLE, KY.

THE NEW YORK MEETING

The meeting of the New York State Association of Teachers of English at Albany, November 27–29, was largely attended. On Tuesday morning, the president, Miss Ellen Garrigues, of the DeWitt Clinton High School, New York City, read a paper on "Teaching Pupils to Think by Means of Their English Work"; Mr. Joseph Loew followed with "Teaching English Expression to Pupils of Foreign Parentage."

On Tuesday afternoon the topic was, "What Should Be the Relative Share of the College, the State, and the High School in Determining the English Work of the High School?" Professor Franklin T. Baker of Teachers College spoke for the college, Avery Skinner of Albany for the Regents, and Theodore C. Mitchill of Jamaica, for the high school. It has been a grievance to the high schools for some time that their curriculum is fixed by the requirements for entrance to college. They

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have been seriously handicapped in their efforts to teach English expression by the fact that they have had to spend so much time in preparing their pupils to pass examinations on the required books that they have had little time left to teach the "weightier matters of the law." Mr. Mitchill urged the right of high-school people to make their own curriculum, and called attention to the fact that of the sixteen men who prescribe the college-entrance requirements in English, only one is a high-school man. He was ably seconded in his remarks by E. R. Clark of Rochester, Allan Abbott of Teachers College, and others. Superintendent D. L. Bardwell spoke in favor of examining for power to use English rather than for knowledge of particular books.

On Wednesday morning, 600 teachers filled the Second Presbyterian Church to hear Herbert Bates of Manual Training High School, Brooklyn, Professor George P. Baker of Harvard, and Don D. Seitz of the *New York World*, on the three chief teachers of English outside the curriculum—Current Fiction, the Drama, and the Newspaper. Each of these speeches was a classic and held the close attention of the audience.

The following officers were elected for 1912; President, Charles E. Rhodes, of Buffalo; vice-president, Miss Henrietta Rodman, of New York; secretary, Edwin Fairley, of Jamaica; executive committee, the officers, and Miss Ellen E. Garrigues of New York, E. D. Holmes of Albany, and E. R. Clark of Rochester.

The *Journal* is quite overcome by the compliments which the first issue has called forth. It is very grateful, nevertheless, to be appreciated. The following expressions are typical: "I congratulate you on the readableness and practical character of the first number of the *English Journal*."—Raymond M. Alden. "The first number of the *English Journal* is very much alive. The *Journal* is going to be a splendid thing."—Edwin H. Lewis. "I think you are going to be able to do a great service to the English teaching of the country."—George L. Towne. "When I came home tonight and found the *Journal* on my desk, I dropped into an easy chair and began to look it over. Tired as I was, I didn't lay it aside until I had read every page. It's great! Professor Hopkins' article alone is worth the price of a ten years' subscription. It's a veritable emancipation proclamation. . . . . Every English teacher who wishes to be put on an equality with his colleagues must rally to your support with enthusiasm, for you are rendering us all the greatest possible service."—Ernest C. Noyes. "Hurrah for the *Journal!* It's fine. Keep it up."—E. H. Kemper McComb.

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REVIEWS

TRAINING IN POETRY

An anthology is ordinarily a confession of taste. Plucking the flowers of poesy is now, in these days of literature teaching, more than a matter of taste; it is one of responsibility. "I offer you these poems, now learn something of poetry from them," is the editor's charge to the student. In other and less pedagogic times, the posy-ring was presented to whoever wished it, in an informal take-or-leave fashion. It was thus that the fantastical garlands of the sixteenth century were compiled. Their titles are in themselves poetical curiosities. They were and are still for the adult student. When Professor Palgrave conceived the more serious purpose of indicating movements in English poetry in *The Golden Treasury*, he was but following the precedent of the Byzantine professor in Dante's time whose Greek anthology is our historic source of training in Greek literature. Once the training idea enters into the selection of poetry, it is but natural that the what and the wherefore of every new offering should be considered. The compilation by Professor Seward[1] invites some yeas and nays as to choice of pieces and to principle of classification.

The narrative poems are in five groups and range from the folk-ballad to Pope's "Rape of the Lock." The poems in each group offer scarcely a question as to their propriety; they are the orthodox offering to the young, with the exception of Wordsworth's "Laodamia" and the "Rape of the Lock." If the stress is upon his style of narrative rather than upon the poet's experiment in narrative style, the "Laodamia" is the least Wordsworthian of all the narrative poems of Wordsworth; unless the "Rape of the Lock" is positively needed to illustrate a point in the appended discussion on a lack of nature-feeling in Pope's age, the poem is a questionable choice. Tennyson's achievement in narrative poetry is remarkable, and this fine fooling of Pope could be dispensed with for the beauty of one of the Idylls; if restraint is the quality to be demonstrated in "Laodamia," let William Morris' "Atalanta's Race" be the choice, and let Wordsworth be represented by what is really his genius in narrative, a free simplicity, not an affected one.

[1] *Narrative and Lyric Poems for Students.* By S. S. SEWARD, JR. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1909.

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No one will quarrel with a division of narrative poems into old and new ballads, short and long poems; but when lyrical poems are labeled "Joy in Life," "On the World of Nature," "Courtship and Love," "Bereavement and Death," and scarcely a poem in any group but could be shifted elsewhere, this kind of classifying breaks down. "It Was a Lover and His Lass" is an out-and-out love lyric; it is not among the love poems. "Elegy in a Country Churchyard" is classed as a poem of grief; it is certainly very abstract grief. "The Chambered Nautilus" is called a nature-poem. There is more didacticism than nature in it. Almost the entire group of nature-poems is subjective in conception. Professor Seward ignored the Elizabethans in this group; he has nothing from Blake; hence the sheer loveliness of nature, except in the few pieces of Shelley and Wordsworth, is not enforced. Herrick's sinister little "Counsel to Girls" is called joyous and the only joyous poem Herrick ever wrote, "Corinna's Maying," is not given. "The Last Leaf of Holmes" is called playful in mood. I have never known a student who did not call it sad. Perhaps students feel more kindly toward old age than Holmes did.

These illustrations are sufficient to point the danger of over-refinement in classification. Lyrical poetry in spite of its enormous diversity is simply differentiated. Poets eternally sing of nature, of love, of the philosophy of life. They frequently blend the three in one poem. If the student recognizes the source of the poet's inspiration, he is on the way to the poet's method of treating his theme, and is at liberty to name it for himself. Professor Seward forces the generalization before the discovery, a method which inhibits both.

So far as his collection recognizes contemporary poets, and includes American as well as English, it deserves praise. In that he does away with any idea of the historical development of poetry, yet attempts to individualize poets, he is delightfully inconsistent. Ridding the student of one difficulty in learning poetry and retaining it in another form is not an advance in this type of literature teaching. A free range among a large number of poems of all types, with no indexing other than the kind a student may arrive at for himself, is the best introduction to poetry. A slow leading to technique must accompany this free reading. The anthology is yet to be compiled which shows, except in snatches, the subtle relation between mood, meter, phrasing; in a word that which makes poetry poetry—its style. Coventry Patmore more than fifty years ago had the right idea of an anthology for young people—a varied garden of beauty in which they roamed at will. Professor

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Seward's notice that his poems are "for students" makes one wonder what period of student life he means. His grouping is too rigid for very young students, and his selection is not varied enough for older students.

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BOOK NOTICES

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THE ENGLISH JOURNAL

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THE EDUCATIONAL MOVEMENT FOR THE NEW AMERICAN DRAMA

MARY GREY PECK
Chicago, Illinois

During the nineteenth century the stage in America was a means of amusement, pure and simple. Our early actors led a picturesque and precarious life, now in the cities, now on the road, "barn-storming" in the primitive sense. But wherever they went, they had but the one mission, to amuse. Reading the memoirs of Jefferson or Mrs. Gilbert, with their recollections of a still earlier generation of stage folk, we feel set back into a joyful old time of bohemian comedy and tragedy lightly carried. The actors were actors and nothing else. Their life was bounded by their profession. They had a profound reverence for Shakesperean tradition; and melodrama, comedy, and farce had come down to them with certain hall-marks which removed these dramatic forms from the vulgar realism of life. In those good old times, the stage was a refuge from reality, a utopia of grandiose emotions and hyperbolic humor, with magnificent tragic frenzies and comic transports. The theater was a place where ladies of delicate sensibilities fainted, and gentlemen applauded and hissed with whole-souled hysteria.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, a change began to be noticeable in American drama, which for some time was almost imperceptible. Indeed, *East Lynne*, *Esmeralda*, and *Uncle Tom's Cabin* are still on the road, and most of us have wept over the woes of *The Two Orphans*, so gradual has been the change. The first symptom of the approaching revolution was seen in the increasing sumptuousness and critical care of Shakesperean productions.

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Those of us who remember the hey-day of the Daly Theater in New York in the nineties, with the early visits of Sir Henry Irving and Miss Terry, and the advent of Bernhardt, Réjane, Dusé, and other famous actors, have seen the dawn of a new age in American drama. From Shakespere and eighteenth-century comedy and Sardou, the new impulse leapt to the opposite pole of realism in Ibsen. At the touch of the grim wizzard of Scandinavia, the old stage crumbled, a new stage took its place, and a group of young playwrights began to write plays dealing with their own country and approximately with the present time. Owing to the Spanish war, there was an epidemic of war plays, which subsided in a varioloid of western and pan-American adventure plays. Then Nance O'Neill and McKee Rankine came from their Australian tour eastward across the country, playing Sudermann's *Magda* in repertoire, Mary Shaw went westward to the coast with Ibsen's *Ghosts*, followed immediately by Mrs. Patrick Campbell with *Hedda Gabler*, *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*, and *The Joy of Living*. Simultaneously with these occurrences, Mrs. Fiske, in her struggle for an independent theater, was searching for a more significant social drama which should reflect American society as French and German drama reflect theirs. The call for the new play was insistent, unmistakable. The trans-continental uproar caused by the passage of the Ibsen pioneers had died down into a grumbling admission by the Great American Public, that although it did not like Ibsen, it had not been able, since seeing him, to like much of anything it had enjoyed before his hateful advent. In short, the public was out of sorts with the stage, wanted something beside amusement. It did not know what it wanted, but it wanted something different from what it was getting.

Many things combined to bring about this demand for a different drama during the first decade of the twentieth century. Suffice it to say that a crisis of social unrest in an established civilization at once deepens the social consciousness, and brings with it a new creative energy in art. The stage has always been quick to reflect social movements. Again and again in its history, from its first glory in Greece to the present time, it has been seized by contending political parties, religious sects, social factions, and made the

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platform for enunciating propagandist or controversial ideas. Repeatedly the stage has been forbidden by law to touch upon political or religious issues. Just as repeatedly has it been proved futile to attempt to hinder it long from reflecting the vital thought and struggles of the time—not only reflecting, but directing them. Such a critical period of social unrest and change has come in America, and with the deepening of thought and emotion attendant upon it, our drama has stirred with the quickening of a new creative impulse. We have called in foreign plays to satisfy our groping after more vital themes, a higher artistic treatment, but they remain foreign. No adaptation can make them reflect American life. We must make our own plays out of our own experience. Ibsen is too grim and mystical, Sudermann too brilliant, the French play too erotic, the English play too smug, for our vast-sprawling energy. Here we are with ninety millions of people, spread over a continent which has its peculiar problems, which has gathered from all the nations of the earth ideals and hopes and ambitions, which is, in the language of one of the strongest of the new plays, the Melting-Pot of old civilizations. We are a huge nation, but we are inarticulate. The literature of our earlier period does not represent us today. Our press does not represent us, except in fragmentary flashes, as a great man expresses himself in table-talk. It takes great painters, great poets, great musicians, great dramatists, to make a nation speak articulately to all generations. The spirit of a race must be sublimated out of the temporal into the eternal before it has found itself, before it can be found by the world. The hunger to see ourselves, to find ourselves, to know and voice ourselves, is at the bottom of this craving for a new drama. It is the symptom of a completed nationality, of social fusion, of the creative energy in the heart of all developed and growing societies. Moreover, the instinct that this energy must take the form of beauty and of truth is as deep with us as with other societies, although we have been negligent in raising standards of criticism.

It has been one of the American principles that the self-made man is more admirable than the man who has been helped to success. Hitherto we have applied this principle in our attitude

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toward the dramatic art. If one might venture a biblical simile, we have allowed the American Jezebel of commercialism to drive our dramatic prophet into the desert to live on the charity of the birds of the air. But he has stayed his appointed time, and he is returning, not in meekness and chastened subservience, but virile and daring, to voice the will and represent in concrete form the struggle of our society. Since the desert could not starve him, we conclude that he is a true prophet, and prepare to receive him as such.

There is a distrust of artistic subsidizing schemes in this country. They have not worked out very successfully, hitherto, and this has been particularly noticeable in the case of the drama. At the same time, it has been proved that the drama cannot flourish if left unsupported. Some form of co-operation and normal interrelation between it and the public must be devised which suits our democratic system. A remarkable movement has been inaugurated in response to this need, a movement which is spontaneous in origin and democratic in principle. After a year and a half of experimental activity, it has demonstrated its worth, and makes a confident claim for public recognition. This movement has formulated itself as the Drama League of America. The story of the rise of the League is brief and suggestive. It begins all unconsciously in the formation of a little reading circle of friends, who lived in and near Evanston, Ill. These women, meeting periodically, became interested in modern plays, and as their interest grew, it spread to their families and acquaintances. The circle grew, its fame spread with it. It outgrew parlor limits and sought larger places of meeting. Its activities attracted the attention of Chicago, then of other cities. Its reading lists and study programs came into demand, and it soon found itself involved in an increasing correspondence, and with an astonishing membership. It was quite evident that it could not, even if it wished, continue to be a mere club, and in view of its connection by correspondence with similar clubs elsewhere, the idea of federation was inevitable. So it came about that on April 25, 1910, the Drama League of America was organized, with headquarters in Chicago. Its first president was Mrs. A. Starr Best, of Evanston. At the present time, its

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membership represents thirty-one states and Canada. It has thrown out a network of clubs over that territory, has strong co-operating centers, issuing bulletins in New York, Boston, and Chicago. It has published valuable reading lists and club study-outlines. It has been widely written up in newspapers and magazines all over the country, and it has on its Board of Directors names of national reputation, such as Mr. George P. Baker, of Harvard University, Dr. Richard Burton, University of Minnesota, Mr. William Norman Guthrie, University of Tennessee, Mr. Frank Chouteau Brown, of Boston, Dr. Louis K. Anspacher, of New York. It has a corps of lecturers presenting its claims to audiences all over the country—audiences of all kinds, university, club, summer-school, church, and miscellaneous.

In order to explain the growth and popularity of the Drama League of America, it is necessary to show what it aims to accomplish, and how its aim fulfils a widespread popular desire.

The purpose of the League, as stated by the President in her first annual address, is—

> to create and organize a public which shall support sound literary and artistic effort on the stage. Recognizing the power of the theater as a great civic force, whose influence is exceeded only by that of the press, realizing that censoring will only help advertise a bad play, not check it, the League acts upon the opposite principle, constructively to create a worthy stage—to support all that is sound and valuable in dramatic art, merely shunning and avoiding meretricious and unworthy plays. Accepting the theory that the managers are really willing to give the public what it wants, the founders of the League have determined to band together into a powerful, concrete body thousands of theater-goers, trained to accept and enjoy only artistic drama well acted.

"To create and organize an audience," that is the League's prime purpose. To do this constructively, educationally, that is its method. Both purpose and method are original, as far as possible from the old subsidizing and censoring methods of "improvement." Both grew out of the experience of that little reading-circle of Evanston; they are natural and unconscious evolutions, they are normal to healthy growth. The purpose of the League is to educate a public by showing what is good and why it is good, not by telling it what is bad. It is to create popular enthusiasm

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for the good, instead of getting a select few to subsidize a theater, here and there, and hire famous actors to play high-class drama to empty seats, while the public flocks across the street to musical comedy. The League's efforts are not restricted to the great centers in their design of creating an audience. They are truly democratic in that they reach out into the towns, villages, and open country. The audience aimed for is not New York, Boston, or Chicago, but a whole nation—Jonesville as well as Broadway, Tombstone as well as Michigan Avenue. A special solicitude of the leaders is for the one-night-stand towns. They feel that only by bringing the new drama close to the whole people can it be constantly renewed and invigorated.

With the same originality which characterizes its purpose, the League has formulated a method of attaining this. It has departmented its work in various committees. The most interesting of these are the Educational Committee and the Playgoing Committee.

The former is subdivided into seven departments, each of which attends to a special field of educational work. The first department is under the charge of Professor George P. Baker, of Harvard University, and undertakes to direct the study of drama. Outlines and reading lists are furnished, and are in preparation by this department. Professor Baker has built up a dramatic center of influence in Harvard which is widely felt. His classes have produced more than one of the promising young playwrights of the new group, writers like Edward Sheldon, author of *The Nigger*, *Salvation Nell*, *The Boss*. His college course in play-writing is a laboratory for practical experience, and the value to the League of his learning and his technical knowledge is of the highest order.

The second department of the committee, called the Junior Department, organizes and outlines work for children's clubs. Its chairman, Miss Cora Mel Patten, 4858 Champlain Avenue, Chicago, is an enterprising young woman who has organized Junior Leagues in widely separated parts of the country. Children's plays are among the most delightful forms of dramatic entertainment, and the extraordinary popularity and success of this branch of the work call for special notice.

The Teacher's Department, chairman, Miss Lucy Johnston,

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1455 E. Fifty-fourth Street, Chicago, a teacher and one of the Directors of the League, has for its object the organizing of teachers' clubs, and the popularizing of a love of drama in the public and private schools of the country.

Closely related to the foregoing department is the Department of Plays for Amateur Acting, chairman, Miss Elvira D. Cabell, 5630 Monroe Avenue, Chicago, also a teacher. The multitude of requests regarding plays suitable for amateur performances, the pleas for advice and suggestion which come to this department are proof of the need of it. A questionnaire, sent out to the institutions of higher education throughout the country by a graduate student at Bryn Mawr this last year, brought out the fact that there are eighty-four institutions among those which took the trouble to reply which support amateur dramatic clubs. When it is considered that in addition to these a large proportion of high schools, normal schools, grade schools, and amateur dramatic clubs unattached to any institution are continually giving plays all over the country, the magnitude and the strategic importance of this amateur work begin to appear. The amateur performance is one of the surest means to arouse and sustain dramatic interest. Its educational value in the school is incalculable, as any teacher who has employed it wisely can testify. The Department of Plays for Amateur Acting furnishes lists of plays suitable for school and other performance, and advises with those who wish direction. The idea of forming such a department was literally an inspiration.

The Lecture Bureau of the Educational Committee, chairman, Mrs. N. B. Lewis, 5435 Magnolia Avenue, Chicago, recommends lecturers and readers to accompany study courses.

The Library Department, chairman, W. N. C. Carlton, Librarian of the Newberry Library, Chicago, furnishes lists of books for general and special study. The lists are selected with a view to meeting various needs, as, for instance, a general list suitable for a small public library, a fuller list for a public library where there is a demand for drama, a list of critical books, of dramatic classics, of modern plays, etc. The books in these lists are purchasable at prices ranging from $50 up.

The Publication Department, chairman, Mr. Barrett Clark,

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University of Chicago, is to issue bibliographies on general and special topics, and will list magazine articles as well as books. Such tabulated information is indispensable to drama-study.

It will be seen, from this outline of the work planned and in operation under the direction of the Educational Committee of the Drama League, how systematic and well adapted to public wants it is. There is scarcely any question that can be formulated which could not readily be assigned to one of these departments for answer. It is the best formulated agency for educating without pedantry which has ever been devised. The whole spirit of the educational department is eager and cordial. It welcomes calls for information as parents welcome a babe's first smile! It has no axe to grind, nothing to gain beyond the altruistic end of a pleasure in art which is made complete by including everybody in its critical enjoyment. The educational uplift of such popular effort as this cannot be measured, but one result is already apparent in every place where a League club has been organized. The local manager feels the pressure of a popular demand for a chance to hear the best attractions on the road. His town knows what these attractions are, and is beginning to clamor for them. That means a revolution in the history of troupes on the road. It means shorter distances, more one-night-stands and half-week engagements; it means an amazing widening of the power of the drama as a vehicle of social utterances.

Another remarkable feature of the League's work is found in the activities of the Playgoing Committee. This committee has in charge the surveillance of contemporary plays. It covers the whole field, keeping track of all good productions of standard as well as of new plays. The purpose of the committee, as formulated on the Chicago play bulletin, is, "The support of good drama by inducing attendance, early in an engagement, upon any play on which the committee issues a bulletin." The committee attend first-night performances, and after consultation, in case they deem the production worthy of support, they write a one-page bulletin, giving in the briefest form information as to the author, the play, character of appeal, acting value, and trenchant quotations as samples of its dialogue. This bulletin is sent to press at once,

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thence to an addressing agency, and is in the mails twenty-four hours after the performance, going to every member of the League throughout the country, urging support of the play. Those who live within practical distance of the local production are urged to attend early in the engagement in order to assure the success of the play and make a run possible. New York, Boston, and Chicago regularly issue such bulletins. The play bulletined in New York is awaited with interest in Boston and Chicago, and vice versa. The fact that one center bulletins a play does not compel the other centers to do so, but as a matter of fact, the harmony of opinion among the local playgoing committees has been practically unanimous. A play bulletined in Chicago stands an overwhelming probability of being bulletined in the other centers. The attitude of the large producing companies of the country, as well as of the local managers, to the work of the Playgoing Committee has been most cordial. They have been quick to recognize the advantage of the bulletin as the highest form of advertising a good production, because the indorsement of the League is disinterested. The effect of these bulletins in increasing box-office receipts has been demonstrated again and again.

But the good work of the Play Bulletin does not stop with the large bulletining centers. The mailing of the sheet to every individual member and affiliated club gives it national scope. Further, the effect of the bulletin on the one-night stand situation is electrifying in its possibilities. In the state of Illinois there are 130 of these stands and only one week stand. In co-operation with the local manager, the bookings of the one-night stand may be examined by the Playgoing Committee, and such attractions as are of merit may be indorsed and bulletined in advance of the engagement by the League. The co-operation of the League in bringing better attractions, and in helping to bring about some periodicity of these instead of the present helter-skelter dearth and congestion of theatrical offerings throughout the more sparsely settled regions of the country, will be a development of the work in the near future.

An earnest appeal for members, for co-operation, is made by the organization. All who are interested may obtain information from the secretary, Mrs. H. P. Jones, 5529 Cornell Avenue, Chicago.

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CLYTIE

A LYRICAL PLAY FOR CHILDREN[1]

MARY ETHEL COURTENAY

Dramatis Personae

Clytie	A Water Nymph
Leucothia	Her Sister
Crystalia	Leader of the Nymphs
The Nymphs	Daughters of Oceanus

SCENE I

SCENE: *Field on the bank of a river. A group of water nymphs in soft clinging robes, their long hair entwined with garlands of seaweed, are seen dancing in a circle on the banks of the stream and singing.*

TIME: *Just before dawn.*

Song of the River Nymphs:

Soft through the tree-tops the night breeze now passes,
Murmuring low as it ripples the grasses;
Lightly our footsteps now press the cool lawn;
Gaily we frolic till coming of dawn,
Ere mortals arousing their couches forsake,
Ere the whole earth is astir and awake:
Then quick through the reeds and the rushes we glide;
Under the waves of the river we hide:
For man must not see the nymph child of the stream,
Nor sun-god disclose with a radiant beam.

Crystalia (pausing in the dance and pointing toward the East):

O see, my sisters, even now a glow,
All warm and rosy, fringes yonder hills,
And sheds a halo over their grey tops.
The Sun-god, Helios, climbs the distant steep
To trace his daily course across the sky.

[1] Written as a regular exercise in the course in Children's Literature in the Chicago Teachers College. Copyrighted. All rights reserved.

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Clytie (musingly):
The radiant sun-god of the golden car.
Second Nymph: We must away, away before he comes.
Nymphs (in unison):
Yes, yes, away!
Clytie: I would that we might stay.
Leucothia: To see the gleaming chariot all of gold
And prancing steeds that from their nostrils breathe
A spray of sparks and tongues of darting flame.
Clytie: To see the sun-god, him who drives the car
Each day across the pathway of the sky,
More glorious than a hundred deities
That rule the silvery pallor of the night.
Crystalia: Sisters, make haste, or else we disobey
The law that Father Oceanus spoke.
The morning dawns, the light is come, away!
(*The* Nymphs *join hands and dance away after their leader, singing, except Clytie and Leucothia, who stand looking intently toward the East.*)
Leucothia (suddenly starting and glancing round):
How still it is! O Clytie, they have gone,
And we have disobeyed, have broke the law
That bids us all return when comes another day.
Clytie: What harm to linger for a sight so rare?
Our father is unjust in his command,
That he denies us sight of one most fair
Of all the gods that on Olympus dwell.
I will remain till I have seen him mount
The pinnacles of Heav'n and all the earth
Grow warm and bright and glad because of him.
Leucothia: Then I will stay to see fair Helios, too;
Together we will watch?—And yet—I fear—
Clytie: See, even now he climbs above the hills;
Dull greyness flees in shame before his glow,
And night's proud queen and all her starry hosts
Have paled and vanished at the god's approach.

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Leucothia: To see and feel his presence from afar
Is worth the risking of our father's wrath.
They say the warm rays of his shining car,
Together with the glory of his smile,
Coax from the ground the tender shoots of spring,
And cause the buds to burst for very joy
And flowers to raise their heads to smile at him.

Clytie: What flower would not live content to know
That he but looked upon her as he passed,
That he, the beaming god of life and love
Had thought to cast a single ray to earth
To touch her heart and kindle it with joy.

Leucothia: Children of men arise to greet him, too:
Do you not hear a faint awak'ning stir
That says the long night of repose is o'er?
How bright and ever brighter grows the day!
O, sister, think you not we should return?

Clytie: Leucothia, you fear, you dare not risk
The anger of our father. Then return.
Remain with those content to stay and hear,
And leave to mortal men and deities
The pleasure and the worship that they crave.
But I go on to yonder grassy knoll
That rises from the green with gentle slope.
There will I gather flowers, and ferns, and leaves
To twine about my hair and wreath my form:
There will I wait with arms outstretched to him
And stand beneath the radiance of his glance
As he drives by along the path of heav'n.
And he will smile upon me when he sees
That I will honor him in spite of all,
And love him, caring not what may befall.

Leucothia (following Clytie as she moves on):
Nay, sister, I will go and stand with you,
And Helios will smile upon me too!

(*End of Scene 1*)

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Scene II

Time: *Same hour as before, on the following day.*

Scene: *Another part of the river's brink. A group of nymphs is seen seated on the ground about their leader, who sits disconsolate on a low mound in their midst. Some are weaving garlands and others, singing and dancing, move in and out among the trees.*

Second Nymph (placing a wreath of leaves on the head of *Crystalia*):
A crown of myrtle freshly kissed with dew.

Third Nymph (throwing a garland over her shoulders):
Garlands that Pan himself might choose to wear.

Fourth Nymph (laying a cluster of flowers in her lap):
Surely Diana could not be more fair.

Second Nymph: But see, she neither notices our gifts
Nor has she heeded aught that we have said.

Third Nymph: 'Tis marvel that she came with us at all
To join our nightly revel on the green.

Crystalia (rising and lifting the garlands that have been given her):
Sisters, I have not heart to dance and sing
Nor can I join in lightsome revelry.
This very garland presses on my brow;
And I can think of nothing but the wrath
Of Oceanus, and the stern command
That keeps Leucothia, our gentle one,
Apart from all our frolic, from our midst.

Third Nymph: She has been guilty of a grave offense,
For she has disobeyed the father's law.

Nymphs (in chorus):
When rosy-tinted skies proclaim the morn,
When upon earth another day is born,
Then in the sylvan glade or on the green
No child of Oceanus may be seen.

Fourth Nymph: But did not Clytie also disobey?

Second Nymph: I doubt not Clytie first proposed to stay;
For often I have heard her wish that we
Might tarry here until the sun-god came.
And once she even thought of venturing
To plead with Oceanus for this boon.

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Fifth Nymph (stepping forward from the background):
It was from Clytie that our father learned
The disobedience of Leucothia.
Crystalia: From Clytie?
Third Nymph: Tell us how it came about.
Nymphs (together):
Tell us, tell us, sister, what you know.
Fifth Nymph: The day was far advanced when they returned,
But Father Oceanus, as you know,
Had noticed not their absence. I made haste,
For I, alone, had heard them as they came,
Leaving the shells I had been polishing,
To greet them with the word that I spoke well.
But scarcely had I spoken when I saw
That there had been harsh words between the two.
A flush of anger colored Clytie's cheek,
Leucothia's eyes were red and stained with tears;
And neither looked at me but hurried on.
Then suddenly there came a threatening sound
That rumbled through the caverns of the stream,
That made the waters surge and foaming rise
To toss in waves and beat against the banks:
It was the river god to wrath provoked
Who struck the sandy floor with his long staff
And thundered his command in angry tones.
Gentle Leucothia trembled at each word,
And when she fain would offer an appeal
Or speak in her defense, he silenced her.
"Your disobedience do not deny,
Your sister Clytie saw and told me of it."
Nymphs: O cruel Clytie!
Crystalia: How could she have done't?
And now she wanders lonely and apart
With no companion save her own remorse.
(*Clytie is seen wandering along the bank of the river in the background.*)
Second Nymph (pointing to the East):
Sisters, beware, lest we too long delay.

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Crystalia: Once more the dawn.
All: Away! we must away!
(*As they move toward the stream Clytie draws away from them.*)
Crystalia (approaching her):
My sister, come, the morning light is here.
(*Clytie draws back in silence.*)
Second Nymph (sarcastically):
No nymph is this but rather goddess born,
Who seeks the fellowship and even courts
The graces of the god of light himself.
The law that simple water nymphs obey
Holds no authority for such as she.
Third Nymph: Goddess in aspirations, but in heart
No nymph is so ungodlike as is she.
Fourth Nymph: A proud and cruel heart.
Fifth Nymph: An unkind tongue.
Crystalia: Sisters, away. Come, Clytie, tarry not.
Repeated sin can naught of pity claim.
Clytie (proudly):
I ask no pity, nor do I expect
Aught but rebuke, but scorn and taunts from you.
Delay not; pause to waste no thought on me.
A second time I disobey the law,
To wait for him who gives not scorn but smiles,
Who knows no hate, whose pity is so free
That it is measured by the world itself.
(*Crystalia reluctantly follows her sisters, and Clytie turns her gaze toward the rising sun.*)
Clytie (with outstretched arms):
O, Helios, to thee alone I turn,
For only thou wilt show me kindness now!
I'll sit forever on this grassy mound
And live content to watch and worship thee.
(*Dropping her arms—continues musingly*):
I wonder if he knows that I have sinned
If even he will blame though not rebuke,
With inward censure, though no outward scorn.

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Why even as I look he seems to draw
An all-obscuring mist before his face
To veil his presence and withhold his smile.
O, Helios, must I believe that thou
Hast sealed thy pity—thy compassion turned
Aside from me whom all things else have spurned?

(*Clytie sinks in despair upon the low mound.*)

(*End of Scene II*)

Scene III

Scene: *Same as Scene II.*

Time: *Same as before, three days later.*

(*A single sunflower is seen growing on the grassy mound. The nymphs form a silent and wondering group about it.*)

Crystalia (regarding the flower):

Still toward the East she turns her constant gaze,
With loyal worship and enduring love,
Waiting to follow with the adoring glance
The sun-god's daily course across the sky.
She sought not pity, but the gods of heaven,
Moved with compassion at the sight of her,
All pale and tearful, pining day by day,
Catching the radiance of the god himself,
Touched with his glory, by his pity blessed,
Have shaped these slender rays of living gold
That circle with a halo her rich heart.
And so unto all time and men she stands
To tell the story of unchanging love.

Leucothia: "What flower would not live content to know
That he but looked upon her as he passed,
That he, the beaming God of life and love,
Had thought to cast a single ray to earth
To touch her heart and kindle it with joy."
Thus Clytie spoke, and mighty Zeus hath willed
That this, her heart's desire, should be fulfilled.

(*The Nymphs join hands and circle about the flower singing.*)

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Song of the Nymphs:

Fair flower-maid of sunlight born
With face upturned to greet the morn,
From hamp'ring law and wrath set free,
Clytie still lives and loves in thee.

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A CHILDREN'S PLAY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN[1]

HARRY KENDALL BASSETT
University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis.

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
Summer Session Picnic
Observatory Hill
Friday, July 28, 1911

"SWEETBRIAR"
A Pastoral
by
DOROTHEA GORE BROWNE

Persons

Roger of the Holt, *in love with Awdrey*
Robin Hood *and* Will Scarlet, *outlaws*
Peter Hucklebag, *a miser*
Astrologer
Miller
Gleeman
Awdrey, *Lady of the Manor*
Cicely, *her friend*
Almira, *a child*
Attendants, Outlaws, etc.

ACT I

Scene. A grass plot in front of Awdrey's Manor House
Time. May Day, about the year 1200, and Awdrey's birthday
Awdrey, Cicely, Attendants in Procession, Gleeman, Roger, and others

ACT II

Scene. An Astrologer's Turret Chamber
Astrologer, Peter, Almira, and Witches

ACT III

Scene. A Chamber in the Manor
Awdrey, Cicely, and others

ACT IV

Scene. A Forest
Awdrey and Cicely, Robin Hood and his men, all others

[1] Worked out as illustrative material for the author's classes in the study of the Festival.

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SYNOPSIS

On May Day all the attendants of the Manor House come to present greetings and gifts to the Lady Awdrey. Roger, bringing a young bird as his offering, is rebuffed by Awdrey. Peter attempts to use this incident as means for furthering his plan of acquiring Awdrey's property. He seeks the aid of an old astrologer and his incantations. His schemes move on successfully until, attempting to make prisoners of Awdrey and Roger, he is surprised in the forest by Robin Hood. Through the gallant outlaw's intervention, Peter's villanies are exposed and the course of true love is made to run as it should.

Heigh for the greenwood in the spring!
What better life can the seasons bring,
To the velvet mole in his earthy dome,
To the small brown bird in his leafy home?
Heigh for the greenwood in the spring!
Woodlanders all they love to sing.

Yes, it is a picnic and when, at six-thirty, a tucket is sounded by two horns to the four points of the compass, the picnickers and some hundreds of others gather on the slope to witness a play.

It is a delightful English pastoral by Dorothea Gore Browne, and as the synopsis indicates, embraces a wide variety in character and in action. There is also much of good, rollicking song and merry dancing.

The actors are children, some forty of them, in ages ranging from five to fifteen years. They enjoy the presentation as much as does the audience. The time devoted to preparation and rehearsal has been so short that no one is tired and worn out.

The setting is Nature's own—a gentle slope, at the foot of which a background of branches has been arranged to mark off the stage. The audience looks out over the stage and to the orchard and lake beyond. A glorious sunset adds its color to the picture.

The costuming is simple but effective. Thought has been taken for the setting and the period of the action, but the children have been given the opportunity to choose colors and suggest materials.

The entire play, including the May Pole dance and several charming little folk-dances, is less than sixty minutes in length and so has just fitted into the twilight hour. The evening is given over to the older ones, who join in game and dance out here on the hilly green.

In the preparation of this little play there was practically nothing of the schoolroom atmosphere, for this was the holiday time. Then, too, the little people were recruited from all over the

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city, so there was little of that neighborhood or school spirit upon which the teacher may rely. The whole affair was arranged and made ready in less than two weeks, and in the preparation there was the same co-operation one should find in the school. The music was a large factor; there was valuable assistance in the preparation of the dances from the department of physical education; the mothers gave cordially of their time and interest. Though it was an out-of-door performance, there was comfort for the audience because the children enunciated well, there was no straining for effect, and throughout there was naturalness, spontaneity, and joy.

Just here, it seems to me, are the danger points in dramatic presentations by children. Too much emphasis is placed on the *finish* of the production, not enough emphasis on the value of the preparation to the children. Too much time is often given to the preparation; I am not advocating *inadequate* preparation, but we are prone to eliminate all spontaneity and naturalness; the children lose interest and make hard work of that which should be real pleasure. Undue labor and expense are put upon the costumes and the stage setting; we seek to leave nothing to the imagination of either actors or audience.

Finally, these simple little plays and dramatizations should be considered as educational tools, not ends in themselves.

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FORMALITY AND INFORMALITY

FRANCES LESTER WARNER
Newton High School, Newtonville, Mass.

Abigail was thinking about her teaching. Every morning for two months she had looked blithely upon three sturdy rows of little Freshman boys. She knew she had made them interested—melodramatic even. She had played with them the brisk game of mental cross-tag, which enlivens every boy's recitation, and she had grown amazingly nimble at it. Inexorably and rigidly she had demanded that the class should know several things exactly; with all her wits she had devised ways of making them feel some beauties and understand some faults; enthusiastically she had rattled the dry bones of her subject until she was not sure that there were any dry bones at all. But just now Abigail was seeing pictures of her class in its natural state, racing down the driveway after school, neckties flapping, bookstraps streaming in their rear, merrily all. What had literature and rhetoric to do with them? Next she pictured them sitting before her in orderly wise, well-dressed, independent, remote. Abigail felt suddenly artificial. Where had their souls been all this time—hers and the boys'? When were they to begin to grow real? "Is it their correctness," wondered Abigail, "or their collectiveness?"

The thought was persistent. Abigail remembered the Sunday afternoons when she had sat with the little boy cousins on the rocks above the trout-spring. There had been the same stories, the same teaching, the same Abigail. Yet there had been a vitality in the very feeling of it when the little gray sweaters and the questioning eyes had gathered around her; and there had been no change in "atmosphere" when they all climbed down the columbine rocks and went through the lane to find the shad-bush flowers. Could it be that Norfolk jackets, a classroom bell, and a multiplication of numbers made the difference?

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"How, for instance," thought Abigail, "would I teach the fifth canto of *Marmion* to an incorrect, uncollective fourth scientific?" Abigail envied Mrs. Nutter, Mrs. Moor, Mrs. Sheridan, and all the mothers of her small Pilgrim Fathers. Given Nutter in pajamas—subdued, sleepy, ready for dreams!— Abigail sighed as she imagined how grimly then the Palmer would find his way through "mountain, moss, and moor," how vivid would appear the warriors "moving athwart the evening sky," and how the story would pause for a little to hear the owlet flap his wing. Surely the fourth scientific in pajamas would want to hear the singing of the queer little tune that belongs with "Oh young Lochinvar is come out of the west." After that sort of teaching, *Marmion* and memory could hardly become separate.

"Still," thought Abigail sleepily, "they *will* wear Norfolk jackets to school."

Thoughtfully she dipped her russet-tipped pen in her red-ink bottle and wrote busily on the back of Nutter's latest theme: "Rewrite, correcting all mistakes in spelling and arrangement, and develop the last paragraph so as to secure proper emphasis for your main idea."

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HOW TO MAKE ENGLISH LITERATURE TEACHING UTILITARIAN AS WELL AS CULTURAL[1]

EDNA WILLIAMS
Ottawa, Kan.

A course in English literature is not meant to be utilitarian, in the ordinary meaning of that word, and there is no necessity for trying to make it so. In the ultimate results of a course in literature there is no measurable difference between the cultural and the utilitarian. The utilitarian is cultural and the cultural is, in the highest sense, utilitarian. They make for the same results in the end. I quote here from an article that I read recently:

> Just so far as the results of a course in English literature teaching are capable of definite and accurate measurements they are comparatively worthless; because it is precisely the things which cannot be measured which should be aimed at.

By the term, utilitarian, as related to the results of English literature teaching, I conceive that we mean the development of real power, the power to weigh and balance and consider and work out independently the problems that come to the pupil as a citizen of the world. If we teachers of literature do not teach these things, we are failing in our greatest opportunity; for otherwise we are teaching but a bit of history, of mythology, of rhetoric, of rhythm and rhyme—all cultural aids, of course, but only lights by which the great purpose of our work is illuminated.

Boys and girls at the age at which they reach us are still very susceptible to all influences of precept and example, and in this association with the masterpieces of the world they are brought into contact with a great many lives and conditions which should enrich their own lives a hundred fold. These pages, under the guidance of the right teacher, should be real life to the pupils, and in interpreting them they should gain power for the right interpretation

[1] Read before the English Round Table of the Kansas State Teachers Association.

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of their own experiences. In the development of such power, we are laying the cornerstone of much strength and growth and happiness. Surely the most absolutely practical, the most utilitarian, force a teacher can exert is to help a boy or a girl to realize life, to see and feel and appreciate, to realize that "the primrose on the river's brim" *is* something more than a yellow primrose. This is teaching him to *live*, not merely to exist.

And how are we to do it? By making it all vital, by making it real. After all, what is the difference today to you and me between Elizabeth of England and Portia of Belmont? For all practical purposes one has just as great a bearing on our mental life as the other. What a wonderful circle of acquaintances and associates—intimate associates—we may have! And each one of these must have a distinct value in the life of the one who comes in contact with them. It cannot be otherwise. Every condition and association touches for good or evil. I cannot tell you just how Burke's *Conciliation* is to become a factor in the life of the boy who studies the lesson each day and hands in a brief at the end of the session, but we know that it does. I cannot tell you why I am better and stronger after an hour spent with certain friends, but I know that I am. I might tell you that the study and discussion of Eliot's and Shakespeare's and Thackeray's great men and women have left an indelible impression and image in the minds of the pupils, but what am I telling you? I couldn't find it out by having them write an examination or a theme. I can see only that they bring to the study of the next classic a broader viewpoint, greater insight into motives, more sincere appreciation, and firmer belief in the basic principles, and I say to myself, "They are growing." What more could I ask? So I say we must make literature teaching vital in order that it may have results utilitarian. But how are we to do this? That is the difficult part. I asked a friend early last spring how to make sweet peas grow. She told me all about digging the trenches, covering the seeds, and watering them. But I had done all that before, and I wanted to know how I was to tell whether they would come up or not. She said that there was no way of telling, so far as she knew, but that if the conditions were all right, they would. If the conditions are all right! In any com-

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bination of boy and book and teacher, the teacher is a very important third, but nowhere so important as in the teaching of literature. Of her all qualities that make for strength and individuality and interest are demanded. She should be wise and sympathetic, full of life and enthusiasm, and with powers of intuition little short of the miraculous. On occasion she should be as volcanic as Vesuvius or soothing as sylvan springs. She should be a good reader, and should have a fine appreciation of the ridiculous and a keen sense of the dramatic. Nowhere should personality be more felt, and yet she must know where to dwarf this in the presence of the masterpiece. She must be able to read stories all about her, in people as well as in books, and she must have a constant and abiding faith in the goodness of God. Then, unless the boy be absolutely wooden, she is bound to strike fire somewhere, and when she has done that, she has vitalized the subject and may congratulate herself that she has done all that a teacher can do to make conditions right.

Now in order to make this subject vital is it necessary to have theme writing? I think not. Understand me please. I am talking about theme writing in connection with the teaching of English literature, not about composition writing as such. This latter is another matter, and I believe should be taken care of by a teacher other than the one who teaches the classics. I do think that one of the best possible ways in which to teach composition is to fill the student with a knowledge of good literature—to make a reader and a student of him. Of course every masterpiece is an applied textbook on rhetoric, and in no better way can he get a vocabulary and a knowledge of idiom, of proper phrasing, of sentence structure, of instinctive sense of style. But this is not the question. Is it necessary to have him write themes in order to teach him literature? Surely not. If a teacher is obliged to have the boy write themes in order to get him to observe and draw comparisons, to apply and arrive at conclusions—to think and work, in other words—then in my opinion there is something wrong with the boy, the classic, or the teacher. "All time" has declared that the classic is all right; we are obliged to deal with the boy as he is; so I judge that the something wrong must be in the teacher. At

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any rate on her will fall the blame, hence it is with her we must deal.

Probably what the teacher needs is more life herself. Of all teachers the English teacher must be alive; and how can she be this in the truest sense when so many of her hours that should be given to sleep and to sunshine are spent over bundles of themes? She needs more books, more people, more out-doors, that she may bring the vitality of these things to her classes. Instead of this she comes to her classes sapped of her strength and freshness because of late hours spent in reading themes, and is physically, mentally, and spiritually too exhausted to make the lesson the spirited, alive, vital thing it should be. Discouraged by her futile attempts to arouse any evidence of thought and work on the part of the pupils, she assigns theme work the subject-matter of which shall embody the discussion which otherwise might have been developed in class. This will make them work, she thinks. Yes, it probably will. But unfortunately it will make her work, too, and thereby make her as unfit for the next recitation as she was for today's. And what about the results to the pupil of a method like this? It usually means that he has had a very close interview with a magazine article or encyclopaedia, an exercise in penmanship, and a conscience as clear, I hope, as a child's should be. Is this teaching literature? I think that theme work in connection with literature teaching results in traveling in a circle; ultimately the teacher retires from the profession a nervous wreck, and the pupil has a horror of literature and shuns the very thought of books, then and ever after.

Theme writing is often, too, the device by which the burdened teacher tries to hear all recite. The class period being short and her pupils many, she employs this method of giving them all a grade, a grade all too hardly won when we realize that it means the sapping of the teacher's vitality and the consequent loss to the pupil in the next day's recitation. The employment of the theme as a time saver is practically its only justification—and if we had the necessary number of teachers it could be done away with.

We need composition work in the high-school course because boys and girls must be trained to express themselves correctly and

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forcibly. But I somethimes think that what we need even more than training in expression is training in ability to find something to express. The majority of the pupils need more material. A pupil will write as he thinks, but he should not have to write in order to think. Writing can never advance one step beyond the thinking, but thinking can go leagues beyond the writing. This thing of getting everything down in black and white has become a household and school saying, and I believe that we are carrying it too far. This is a speaking age. People must be able to think and express themselves in good forcible English "on their feet," and we are not going to develop that power by having the pupils constantly practicing "on theme paper, in ink." I am not here to discuss methods, but I should like to suggest that the oral composition, prepared *in class*, a certain portion of the period being allowed for its preparation, the subject-matter embodying the discussion of any question the lesson suggests, is excellent drill. It corresponds to drill in mental arithmetic in the teaching of that subject.

So I say that we do not need to burden ourselves and our pupils with themes in order to make the lesson in literature practical. We do need to do it because we are too lifeless to do anything else, and because we are teaching both literature and composition, and their correlation seems natural; but otherwise there is no real need of it. Literature teaching is one of the most utilitarian professions there is—men and women can be made by it alone and have been and will be. We who are conscientious teachers of literature know that this is so. And the pity of it all is that we likewise know that this efficiency has been restricted, this power for good sapped, by this twentieth-century demand to "write it all out on theme paper and hand it in tomorrow."

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A WEEK'S WORK IN ENGLISH (7)

EDWIN L. MILLER
Central High School, Detroit, Mich.

For several years we have had in the Detroit Central High School a course for twelfth-grade students known as English 7. There is no syllabus for this course. It is described by the single phrase, theme writing. The teacher is given the widest latitude in the handling of this work, the only injunction laid upon her being that she shall fit the instruction to the individual needs of the pupils as they come to her. The course has proved decidedly popular and unquestionably useful. For the most part the work has been conducted by the teachers on the theory outlined in Stevenson's *Essay on an Old College Magazine*. It occurs to me that a description of the work done by one of our classes in the course of a week may have some interest.

On Monday, as a model, the teacher dictated to the class Victor Hugo's description of the battlefield of Waterloo as follows:

He who would get a clear idea of the battle of Waterloo has only to lay down upon the ground in his mind a capital A. The left stroke of the A is the road from Nivelles; the right stroke is the road from Genappe; the cross of the A is the sunken road from Ohain to Braine l'Alleud. The top of the A is Mont St. Jean; Wellington is there. The left-hand lower point is Hougomont; Reille is there with Jerome Bonaparte. The right-hand lower point is La Belle Alliance; Napoleon is there. A little below the point where the cross of the A meets and cuts the right stroke is La Haie Sainte. At the middle of this cross is the precise point where the final battle word was spoken. There the lion is placed, the involuntary symbolism of the supreme heroism of the Imperial Guard.

The triangle contained at the top of the A, between the two strokes and the cross, is the plateau of Mont St. Jean. The struggle for this plateau was the whole of the battle.

The wings of the two armies extended to the right and left of the two roads leading from Genappe and from Nivelles, D'Erlon being opposite Picton, Reille opposite Hill. Behind the point of the A, behind the plateau of Mont St. Jean, is the forest of Soignes.

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As each sentence was dictated, the teacher requested some member of the class to read it to make sure that it had been correctly understood, and in addition asked that the student tell where marks of punctuation should be placed. In some cases the students were requested to tell whether the sentence was simple, complex, or compound, the idea in this being to show how it should be punctuated and how the author had avoided monotony by means of variety in sentence structure.

The work for Tuesday was definitely assigned by means of the following questions and directions:

1. Who was Wellington?
2. Who was Napoleon?
3. Why did they meet at Waterloo?
4. Where is Waterloo?
5. Explain the principle on which this description has been constructed?
6. Explain the function of each paragraph.
7. Find some other instance in which the principle has been used and bring it to the class.
8. Suggest another subject which can be treated in the same way.
9. Come to the class prepared to present an oral theme on this subject.

The recitation on Tuesday was devoted to the discussion of these questions. Among the subjects presented or suggested were:

The City of Pittsburgh compared to the letter Y.
The State of Michigan compared to a Mitten.
My Uncle's Farm compared to the letter P.
The City of Detroit compared to a Wheel.
A Baseball Field compared to a Diamond.
Italy compared to a Boot.
St. Paul's Cathedral compared to a Cross.
The Battle of Gettysburg compared to Two Fish Hooks.
The Detroit Central High School compared to the letter I.
The State of Louisiana compared to a Chair.
The Siege of Boston compared to the Turkish Crescent.
The City of Chicago compared to the letter Y.

The students were instructed to have these descriptions written out and ready to be handed in on Wednesday.

The recitation on Wednesday was devoted to an oral examination on technical subjects in which some of their previous

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compositions had shown a lack of knowledge. The following questions are typical of those discussed:

1. Can you paint a habit?

2. What is the objection to telling an entire story in the tense in which you begin to tell it?

3. Why do city editors insist upon their reporters numbering their pages?

4. What does Chaucer mean when he says:

> There is ne werkeman, whatever he be,
> That can both werken wel and hastile.

5. What figure of speech have we in the phrase: "Make haste slowly."

6. Which uses a larger portion of split infinitives and dangling participles, yourself or Admiral Schley?

7. Under what circumstances is it proper to use a semicolon in a complex sentence?

8. Under what circumstances is it proper to use the word "and" to connect an adverb with a noun?

9. Is any caution required in the use of the word "the"? If so, what?

10. Discuss the difference between the following pairs of words: its and it's; lie and lay; like and as; nor and or; later and latter.

11. Correct the following sentences and tell the reason for each change:

When still a boy, his parents moved to Kalamazoo.

Alexander Pope died in 1774.

A great deal of commerce and importing and exporting is carried on.

The Scotch inhabit one, the Irish another, the third by the English.

If anyone thinks this reasonable, let them read the *Merchant of Venice*.

Dr. Johnson wrote a satire on Juvenal, the life of a savage, and the Pope's *Messiah*.

On Thursday the teacher handed back the compositions which had been presented Wednesday. These had all been proofread. The course is conducted on the theory that every composition must be rewritten until it is good enough to be printed, or, perhaps I should say, correct enough to be printed. Every composition is rewritten unless it is practically correct the first time that it is handed in. It must be understood, however, that mere correctness is not the sole criterion of success. The teachers are constantly on the lookout for something higher and finer. There is a story that Will Levington Comfort, the author of *Routledge Rides Alone*, was once a student in the Detroit Central High School and was plucked in English because he could not or would not live up to the rules of composition laid down by his English teacher. Whether this was a mistake or not I cannot say. Probably he richly

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deserved it. At all events the ultimate result has been fairly satisfactory. We entertain the idea that the commonplace student and the genius are neither of them any the worse for being able to spell and punctuate.

Friday is public-speaking day. On that day the compositions that are worth reading are read. Those who have succeeded in writing sufficiently well throughout the week have really no preparation to make for this day. The others are required to hand in their compositions rewritten. Those who have not been able to write anything sufficiently good to be read to the class are also required to speak a piece written by somebody else.

As a slight indication of the quality of work which this system produces, I add two of the compositions written during the week which I have just been describing.

MICHIGAN

He who would get a very clear idea of the lower peninsula of Michigan has only to think of a mitten. The counties between Saginaw Bay and Lake Huron are the thumb. The counties bounded by Lake Michigan, the Straits of Mackinac, and Lake Huron are the tip of the mitten. Detroit, the largest and most important city of Michigan, is situated at the base of the thumb. Saginaw and Bay City, both of which are noted for their great out-put of lumber, are between the thumb and the first finger. Alpena, noted for its large cement factory, is at the end of the first finger. On the end of the second finger is Cheboygan, a great lumber center. Petoskey, a popular summer resort, is on the end of the third finger. Grand Rapids, a great manufacturing center for furniture, is just below the fourth finger. If we could imagine a life line drawn on the mitten, Ann Arbor, in which the University of Michigan is located, would be at the lower end of the life line. The mitten is filled with holes which represent the many small lakes of Michigan.

CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

He who would get a clear idea of the plan of Central High School has only to think of a capital I. The top and bottom strokes, together with the line joining them, are halls. At the right end of the lower hall is the Warren Avenue entrance; at the left end are the Hancock Avenue entrance and the 12-A assembly room, while at the point where the joining line meets the lower stroke is the main entrance on Cass Avenue. At the point of intersection of the top stroke and the joining line of the I is the 11-A assembly room, while on the left and right are the 12-B and 11-B assembly rooms respectively. At the extremities of the upper stroke on the second floor are two large gymnasiums. The 10-A assembly room is at the left end of the lower stroke; and the

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10-B assembly room is at the middle of the upper stroke. On the third floor, which consists only of the lower stroke and the joining line of the I, are the 9-B and 9-A assembly rooms, while in the joining line is the large school auditorium. The remainder of the halls, throughout the building, is lined with classrooms.

On the left and right of the joining line, and between the two cross strokes of the I, are courts, with doors leading out on them, where the students are allowed to go during the recreation period.

Among other things that have been used in this course for models this semester are the following:

1. The first and second paragraphs in *Bleak House* for a description of the weather.

2. Eugene Field's room in his Denver newspaper office, as described by Slason Thompson, for describing an animal by means of his den or a man by means of his room.

3. One of Macaulay's letters to his sister Hannah (see Trevelyan's *Life of Macaulay*, year 1843) as a model for a travel letter.

4. Kingsley's Three Fishers for a story in three pictures or situations.

5. Charles Lamb's *Autobiography* as a model for a short autobiography or biography.

6. The first paragraph in Caesar's *Commentaries* as a description of some other country; for example, the British Isles, North America, or the United States.

7. Oliver Wendell Holmes's paragraphs on slang in the *Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* for an argument against anything objectionable, such as tardiness, whining, the use of the expression "I can't," laziness, etc.

8. Addison's *Essay on Clubs* as a model for an essay on houses, windows, janitors, street cars, churches, uniforms, etc.

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SCIENTIFIC PRINCIPLES IN THE TEACHING OF COMPOSITION

SHERWIN CODY
School of English, Chicago, Ill.

Says Professor Thomas R. Lounsbury in his article in *Harper's Magazine* on "Compulsory Composition in Colleges," "On no one subject of education has so great an amount of effort been put forth as on the teaching of English composition with so little satisfactory to show for it." Until a few years ago, he says, very little attention was given to English. Then began an era of theme writing and criticism. "While there are many men who write excellently, there is no increase in the proportional number of this body"—in other words, all our tremendous effort in trying to teach English has been a dismal failure.

A common way of teaching composition is by the use of a textbook on rhetoric. Says Professor Lounsbury:

> Another allied illusion is that an effective agency to bring about such a result is the study of rhetoric. . . . . As grammar is nothing but the generalization of the facts of utterance, so rhetoric is nothing but the generalization of the facts of style. In both cases the facts must be known before the generalization can be appreciated or even understood. The child does not learn his language from his grammar. After he has learned it in other ways, grammar steps in and furnishes him a scientific analysis of what he has been doing. So rhetoric gives the student the names of the different styles, ... but the perfect style it does not and cannot impart.

But at any rate constant practice in theme writing will give the results, we are told. To this Professor Lounsbury replies:

> At the outset practice is so far from being of highest importance that as compared with other agencies it is of but little. Clearness or effectiveness or felicity of expression can never be created by it, nor can they be developed by it satisfactorily unless the proper foundation has previously been laid. [Correcting these themes is a practical failure for unavoidable reasons.] The task of reading and correcting themes is one of deadly dulness. Men who are really fitted to perform the work are exceedingly rare; and when found, they will not

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persist in carrying on this most distasteful of occupations, unless compelled by necessity. As a consequence the business of correcting and criticizing themes tends steadily to fall into the hands of those who are incompetent to do anything much better, and therefore incompetent to do this well.

But that is not all. We are actually teaching errors. Says Professor Lounsbury:

It is fairly certain, indeed, that under our present system no small share of the instruction given in composition conveys as much error as truth. . . . . Idioms and constructions employed unhesitatingly by every great master of our speech are as unhesitatingly condemned. Have we not been told again and again that *none* must never be used as the subject of a plural verb; that *whose* must never be used as a relative to an antecedent without life; . . . . that the dreadful neologism of *would better* with the infinitive should be substituted for *had better*.

In other words, we are making a tremendous effort to teach the names of rhetorical tools before the student has seen or understood the thing itself—furnishing handles without the instrument to which to attach them. We are making a tremendous ado about practice in expressing without any ideas to express or any models to inspire the best modes of expression. Finally, with a false hypercriticism, we are actually teaching innumerable errors—we are condemning as improprieties the fundamental idioms of the language.

What should we do? Let Professor Lounsbury answer.

Fulness of knowledge and clearness of thinking are the first two requisites which should be possessed by him who sets out to compose a work which has any reason for its existence. [In other words, we should teach life and how to think about it as two-thirds of the elements of success in effective expression. But there are two other qualities which go to constitute the ideal style.] The first is the ability to write with effectiveness, to put forth one's ideas so as not merely to enlighten men, but to impress them, to influence their beliefs and acts. [This is very largely a matter of knowing the persons for whom we are to write so that we can go straight to the points in which they are chiefly interested, and touch the springs to which they will respond. The way to accomplish this is to teach the observation of human nature.] "Higher" even than that, though not infrequently not even conjoined with it [I disagree with Professor Lounsbury as to this being a "higher" quality] is that of exquisiteness of diction, that indescribable charm of expression which we feel in the productions of great authors, but find it difficult if not impossible to analyze.

How shall we learn this art of writing?

The art of writing, like that of painting and sculpture, is an imitative art. Accordingly the culture and perception of beauty necessary to produce success

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in it are best and soonest acquired, not by the study of grammatical and rhetorical textbooks, but by the imitation, conscious or unconscious, of some one or some number of those whom the race regards as its great literary representatives. . . . . To become thoroughly conversant with the works of a great writer, to be influenced by his method of giving utterance to his ideas, to feel profoundly the power and beauty of his style, is worth more for the development of expression than the mastery of all the rhetorical rules that were ever invented.

The intuition and not the reason is to be educated.

Constant familiarity with the language of authors of the first rank imparts in time that almost intuitive sense of what is right or wrong in usage which distinguishes the cultivated man of letters from the sciolist who bases his judgment upon what he has found in grammars and manuals.

Along with this we must teach pupils how to think.

It has to be repeated again and again that clear thinking precedes clear writing and does not follow it. . . . . It is enough to say that any system of instruction ever devised which succeeds in imparting to all those pursuing it clearness of ideas, will have solved the educational problem of the ages and have begun the intellectual regeneration of the race.

Professor Lounsbury's article has been quoted at length because it expresses unusually well the principles in dealing with English composition which the present writer has been struggling toward ever since he graduated from Amherst College in 1889. He was prize man in mathematics and seemed to have a career as engineer cut out for him; but though with small faith in his ability as a writer, he decided to devote his life to applying the modern scientific method to the study and teaching of the English language and literature, simply because no one else seemed in the very least degree likely to do this. From time immemorial, language has been taught as a matter of tradition and authority, and the masters of language have hated mathematics and considered scientific study positively hostile in its barrenness to anything like literary expression.

The modern scientific method is to formulate an hypothesis and then test it for results. Had this method been used by our teachers of composition for the past twenty years, we should not be spending an infinite amount of energy teaching a subject without

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getting proper results. When the results did not materialize we should have stopped and investigated to see what was the matter.

The imitation of masterpieces after the method of Franklin and Stevenson has been a popular by-word among writers of modern-language books: but while the authors have said they were following this method, they have in reality stuck very closely to the old-fashioned rhetorics for nine-tenths of their exercises; or else they have gone to the other extreme and provided such a miscellaneous hodge-podge of literary exercises that they have induced a mental indigestion that has dissipated the intuitive mental powers of the student to an alarming degree. The desire of publishers to have everything in a book has taken away all steadiness of purpose, all straightforward, persistent literary practice, and substituted a butterfly flitting from one literary flower to another. The subjects for composition work are either oppressively commonplace and uninteresting, or too difficult and involved.

A RATIONAL COURSE OF STUDY IN COMPOSITION

The conventional division of all literary composition into "Exposition, Narration, Description, and Argumentation" has always seemed to the present writer so artificial as to be useless. The distinction does not help the mind of the student in his practical writing; and as a matter of fact nearly all composition is a judicious union of the four, and students waste time in trying to discriminate when discrimination does not help them. Classifications more natural and well understood, such as the humorous style, the oratorical style, the critical style, the style of fiction, etc., would appeal more strongly to the mind of the student.

As a matter of fact, the easiest form of exposition is found in letter writing. Letter writing also gives the greatly needed practice on conversational English. If the teacher has in the hands of the pupils a thoroughly well-written series of modern business letters such as can now be obtained, and requires steady composition work in imitating and paralleling these good models on easy business subject-matter carefully worked up, an excellent course is provided for the first year in the high school. It is easy enough for all beginners, it gives preliminary written training on conversational

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English which so much needs to be taught, and affords the basis for systematic study of grammar, punctuation, and spelling, which should be carried along parallel with the composition work.

The second year is as early as most high-school pupils are capable of taking up the rewriting of selections from the standard authors, even the simplest of those that are at the same time rhetorically typical. The following selections are recommended: Franklin's own description of how he learned to write, Ruskin's "The King of the Golden River" (largely for preliminary work on oral story-telling), Addison's "Advice in Love," some of Stevenson's letters to his mother or his friend Sidney Colvin, Charles Lamb's letter to Bernard Barton describing a cold, Poe's ridicule of "William Ellery Channing," Macaulay's description of "The Puritans," De Quincey's "Dream-Fugue," Thackeray's "Before the Curtain" and description of the Battle of Waterloo in *Vanity Fair*, the opening paragraphs of Matthew Arnold's "Sweetness and Light," compared with the opening paragraphs of Ruskin's "Of Queen's Gardens" in *Sesame and Lilies*, Dickens's story of "Polly" in "Barbox Bros. & Co.," a section of *Mugby Junction* (called by W. E. Henley the best short story Dickens ever wrote, and peculiarly fresh because nearly unknown), a few paragraphs from Crane's "Red Badge of Courage" (as an example of the modern epigrammatic style), a paragraph or two from Ecclesiastes as an example of lofty simplicity, compared with Franklin's *Poor Richard's Almanac* and Lincoln's "Gettysburg Speech."

The third year the composition work might consist in rewriting short stories—condensing Aladdin, for example, from 15,000 words to 1,500 words by a process of judicious selection, changing one of Maupassant's stories from a Paris setting to an American setting and characters, etc.

No better modern practical application of argumentation can be found than in the study of salesmanship and advertisement writing. America is a business nation. Our education is urged largely as a good preparation for success in doing business. Even girls need this training on how to do business—how to find out actual, exact facts such as alone have a standing in business, handling customers with tact, courtesy, and winsome freedom of

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conversation, and convincing prospective buyers by the most perfectly developed practical forms of argumentation. It would be difficult to choose better work for the last year in the high school than practical sales letter writing, oral salesmanship talks, and the writing of careful advertisements, based on the study of some actual and universally accessible business, such as that of selling groceries at retail. Incidentally, every person needs to know how to buy food to advantage so as to stop our enormous food waste and reduce our excessive cost of living along the lines employed by the thrifty French.

CORRECTING PAPERS SO AS TO GET RESULTS

In many schools it is certain that positive results from the teaching of English composition are not obtained. It has been proved again and again, however, that they can easily be obtained, and no teacher should be satisfied without them.

Failure comes largely, we believe, from lack of a positive system of the right kind. Teachers are attempting to do the impossible. The report on "English Composition Teaching" of the Modern Language Association, summarizing the opinions and practice of over one thousand teachers, indicates that all consider theme writing essential. High-school pupils average 380 words a week, the number of pupils to a teacher averages 128.6, the themes can be read at an average rate of 1,950 words an hour, and 25 hours each week for the private reading and correcting of themes are required. Of course this is a physical impossibility for English composition teachers who have as many, or nearly as many, hours of classwork as other teachers and receive no higher pay. Some teachers handle as many as 250 pupils at one time.

The only partially successful attempt to do this physically exhausting and nerve-wracking feat results in giving attention to little besides spelling, punctuation, and sentence form, according to the report of the committee. The quality of the work is necessarily so low that results are anything but satisfactory to a majority of these teachers.

That the prodigious effort which is actually breaking down the health of hundreds of teachers of English composition and driving

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the best ones out of the field is largely wasted effort is apparent to the outsider, and indeed to many of the teachers, who nevertheless do not see a better way, and base their hope on an increase in the number of assistants. On the present system one teacher can comfortably handle classes of about 12 each, though the committee report indicates they think they can handle about 20 in a class, with a total of 60 to 80. The chances of their getting reduced classes so long as English is required of all pupils, and is assigned a larger number of hours in the course than any other subject, is exceedingly small, we fear.

With such hasty work, is it any wonder that pupils glance over their papers and say, "Did I make all those mistakes?" and then crumple them and throw them into the wastebasket, or lay them away never to be examined again? If they are required to be rewritten, how mechanically is this work done when the mind of the pupil has not been led to clearer thinking and a more lively appreciation of just why he has failed to express himself satisfactorily in his imperfect sentences!

Even when by practice the greatest facility is obtained, it requires at least ten minutes, perhaps fifteen, to correct a paper of three hundred words, and the best way to do it is orally, the pupil himself writing the corrections as he is directed. A few such criticisms, by a thoroughly intelligent and competent teacher who is sufficiently sympathetic, will do wonders. In fact the present writer knows of no other way in which English composition can be taught successfully than by this careful, sympathetic, strictly personal criticism of theme work prepared under favorable conditions. Doubtless all teachers of English will agree to this.

The best results can be obtained only when the classes are small. When the classes are what they now average in high schools and even in colleges, the teacher must choose between giving a very few careful personal criticisms and letting the rest go entirely, or trying to give a very cursory written criticism to as large a number as possible. The present writer believes the cursory method absolutely fatal to good results—a painful, conscientious, but none the less futile, expenditure of time and energy.

Written criticisms are probably better than oral if the pupil

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can be forced to give attention to what is written; but as this seems impossible or very doubtful, there can be little question that the only good and rational way is to correct papers orally, forcing the pupil to write his own corrections under dictation. *If every such criticism is in the presence of the whole class, if every member of the class has a paper on the same identical subject-matter*, so that five to six successive criticisms made during the recitation hour lead each pupil in the class to review his own work five or six different times while he listens to individual criticisms and of course takes his own turn once a week or once in ten days, and *if all pupils are forced to study their own work repeatedly* by the application of a "system for self-criticism," and finally rewrite nearly every paper from memory after this most thorough study so as to get freedom of style and ease of expression, then teachers will get good results in proportion to the number of pupils they handle, and without doing much, if any, thankless drudgery outside of the class.

All pupils are making much the same mistakes. How foolishly unscientific it is not to keep the entire class to listen to all of the criticism, even the most individual! While a pupil would benefit more by the criticism upon his own work, no teacher can doubt that he will benefit very materially by following closely the criticism of others, especially if *the material is identical.*

HABIT-FORMING IMITATION OF MODELS VS. CREATIVE WRITING

Results in writing and speaking good English come only from establishing habits—and that requires *persistent work along very fixed lines*, just as piano teachers keep their pupils most of the time on finger exercises. It is a little monotonous, but *habits* can be formed in no other way.

English composition is intended to teach pupils to express whatever thoughts in the ordinary rounds of life they have actual occasion to express—not to make novelists, essayists, or poets of them. There should be *intense concentration on expression.* Why not take the thoughts expressed by the great literary masters (who wrote in classic English) and drill pupils persistently on the expression of those thoughts in modern conversational English? Then they not only have thoughts supplied, but they have always before

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them the best models of expression. Most teachers of composition theoretically approve the method of Franklin and Stevenson of imitating masterpieces; but as they are not provided with a severe and practical system, they flit from one literary flower to another, and fail, because of lack of sufficient intensity, to create habits.

ORAL PRACTICE

The ideal style for letter writing (and that is where the average pupil needs to use his power of English composition after he has left school) is good conversation. If a person can talk well, and then can express himself in a letter as well as he can talk, he has attained the ideal. Our schools teach written literary composition which is unsuited to conversational uses. Most teachers admit the value of oral teaching of English, but do not seem to know how they can handle the subject. The most simple system for doing this is to retell orally in the class the substance of a simple literary masterpiece. Few pupils will retell that substance in antiquated literary English. The natural instinct will compel a conversational selection of words. Obviously, oral telling of the story or oral description is the correct preparation for natural written expression.

SYSTEMATIC REWRITING

Nearly all of the rewriting required at present in high schools is along the line of correcting errors and presenting a mechanically accurate paper. The present writer has found that the best composition, after thought and study, can be laid aside and rewritten from memory with a vastly improved style. The first writing is necessarily a part of the process of thinking out the subject, while the second writing leaves the attention free to concentrate on the best expression.

THE HABIT OF SYSTEMATIC SELF-CRITICISM

Pupils need to be taught how to criticize—how to criticize their own work systematically, and then how to criticize the work of others. When the teacher tries to do all the criticizing, this power of criticism is not developed. Many teachers at times ask pupils to exchange papers and criticize the work of each other; seldom

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do they call upon them to criticize their own work under direction. Small results are to be obtained without telling the pupils just what to look for, what they will probably find, and what criticism they ought to make.

Only one subject can be considered by the beginner at one time. First the young critic must go over the paper to read aloud and try to catch dissonant words or unmelodious phrases; then he should go over the whole especially to find errors of grammar; then errors of punctuation, etc. When things are taken up one at a time, when the probable errors are suggested, and the teacher leads the mind of the pupil along by easy steps, a real power of criticism will soon develop, and it will be of infinite value. When only five or six papers can be criticized during a recitation hour, all the others ought to be subjected to the best critical revision of the pupils, who will be going over their papers to look for just the things the teacher is trying to find in the one paper that is receiving personal attention as it is read aloud.

EXCHANGE CRITICISM

The first effort should usually be criticized by the pupil himself as he follows the teacher's audible and public criticism of the papers that are read aloud in the class. Each paper so read aloud should usually be made a subject of study on only one of the topics in the "system for self-criticism" given below; but if the teacher stands behind the pupil looking over his shoulder, he can indicate to the class every misspelled word, every error of punctuation, etc.

If it is possible to do so, pupils should be required to write their papers first on loose sheets of paper, and when they are perfected to copy them into a special composition book. That will give two copies: the book can be left at the desk of the teacher as pupils come in and the rough copy kept in the hands of the pupil to read from.

In the front of each book there should be one page with numbered lines, the numbers written down the center of the page. At the right of the column of numbers the names of the members of the class should be written in the order dictated by the teacher, so that each pupil has a number. When papers are to be given out for exchange criticism, No. 1 can give his book to No. 2, No. 2 to

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No. 3, and so on, and a check mark made in the book to the left of the name of the person receiving the book. The next time No. 1 will give his book to No. 3, No. 2 to No. 4, and so on; and in due course every pupil's papers will be criticized by every other pupil in the class. This exchange will apply to the finally rewritten themes only. Teachers at any time by looking over the books can see how pupils are doing and give special assistance to those who particularly need it.

A SYSTEM FOR SELF-CRITICISM

After completing each composition the student should submit it regularly to the following tests:

A. Read it aloud in a natural tone of voice, if possible to some member of the family at home or to some friend, concentrating all attention upon detecting any disagreeable repetition of the same word or of similar sounds, any uneuphonious phrase, any sentence too long, any jerkiness because of sentences too short, any failure to be quite clear, and any unnatural use of a word or phrase.

B. Observe the paragraphing. Is it distinctly marked? Does each paragraph deal with but a single subject, or are two or more subjects run into one paragraph? Is any subject broken off in its middle at the end of one paragraph and taken up again in the next? Is there an easy transition from one paragraph to the next?

C. Carefully check up the things that ought to be said so as to be sure nothing of importance has been omitted. For this purpose make an outline without looking at your composition, and then compare your composition with the outline. Observe that the composition is to be written before any outline has been made. Trust first to your instinct; then check up your instinct by your reason. The present writer does not believe it is usually a good thing to make an outline preparatory to writing.

D. Rapidly run over the grammatical connection of each word to be sure every subject has its correct predicate, every verb is the right form, every subordinate clause has its introductory word, every adjective is made to modify only a noun, and every adverb is made to modify only verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs; that every phrase is in the best possible position so that no improvement could be made by transposition.

E. Examine the punctuation—first the periods, then the interrogation points and exclamation points, then the semicolons and colons, and finally the commas. Rapidly decide in your own mind what rule applies to each comma used.

F. Examine the use of words. While you write as you feel, and use the words or phrases that seem natural, you should critically test each word to

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make sure (1) that it really expresses the meaning you intend; (2) that it is a good word; (3) that you cannot find a better word. Do not change any word or phrase simply because you cannot explain its use if your instinct tells you it is natural. Trust your instinct every time in preference to your reason if there is any doubt. Changing a good word or phrase unnecessarily should be considered a genuine error.

This will require going over your composition six separate times, for you should think of only one thing at a time. At the bottom of the sheet when you have finished write opposite the letter corresponding to what you are doing, as A B C, etc., the number of changes you have found it necessary to make under that head, so that in the classroom you can explain the changes, telling why you made them. That you may find them readily, circle each so that your eye will catch it quickly.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Questions following the selections for study should be given merely to help observation, and no stress whatever should be laid upon remembering the answers. Let pupils write out answers to the questions with the book open before them and read the replies they have written. There should be few recitations with the book closed. Always keep the book open, while either studying or reciting, as in real life, if it will give any help. Only the things that are done by making use of all material within reach, are of genuine importance.

CREATIVE COMPOSITION

It seems extremely doubtful whether injury is not done the student by requiring a forced creative effort. Creative writing should be not only voluntary but not even permitted unless the student actually has something he or she wants to tell. At intervals the teacher may inquire if any pupil has a story, description, or argument which he desires to write out. Those who have should be asked to tell the substance to the class, and the teacher may inquire whether the class would like to hear this paper. If the subject is sufficiently interesting to promise real entertainment or instruction, and the others manifest any desire to hear it, the teacher may give permission to write out the composition, as a sort of reward of merit. When writing compositions is actually forbidden there may be some chance that it will be desired, and as in real life, merit alone will secure a hearing.

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THE ROUND TABLE

AN EXPERIMENT IN CO-OPERATION

An attempt has recently been made in a normal school to meet the constant complaint that power gained in literary composition does not transfer to theme work in subjects other than English. Use was made of the fact that the task of effecting such transfer is a triangular affair, the apexes being the English instructor, the instructors in other subjects, and the students themselves. In this case, the instructors in psychology, mathematics, art, and industrial arts assigned subjects and directed the gathering of material; the English instructor took matters of technique as his natural task; and all united in trying to impress the students with the purpose of the plan and with the importance of their own personal endeavor.

The special aim of the English instructor at this particular time was to let his students have practice in the gathering and organizing of material from the literature of the subjects then being studied, and to impress them with the moral obligation of acknowledging the sources of their information. Being wise from former experience, or, at least, thinking himself so, he was careful to instruct his classes that the themes must, after all, be more than material gathered from books and periodicals; there must also be the original touch that would come from the expression of personal views and of such personal experience as might come within the range of the subjects.

After the themes had been read by the instructor concerned, a meeting was called to consider results. The verdict rendered was not such as to cause the English instructor any undue self-glorification. While his fellow-teachers admitted that the technique of the themes was somewhat better than usual, that the plan had been worth while, and that it was worthy of further experimentation, it was observed, on the other hand, that many of the themes had been nothing more than compilations, that some showed the diverse styles of the authors whose works had been consulted, and that in some cases the expression was strained and artificial. There were several exceptions to these disappointments. One student, especially, wrote in a style that was

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strictly original and highly effective. She seemed to write with the subconscious feeling that rhetoric is the science of communicating thought, while most of the others seemed to consider it the science of carrying out the orders of an English instructor.

While much of the artificiality and the slavish adherence to notes was doubtless due to the facts that the technique of composition had not yet become a matter of habit, and that using material from assigned sources was more or less a new thing, most of the fault lay in three blunders of the English instructor: he gave no preliminary practice in the exposition of subjects related to the studies from which the themes were chosen, he did not insist upon the subject-matter being thoroughly digested and the notes thrown aside before the themes were written, and he did not attempt to put his students in the attitude of imparting information to persons who were ignorant and might want to know. These blunders were especially bad because the instructor thought he knew better than to fall into them. It seems that the judgment of his associates was necessary to awaken him to a consciousness of his ability to do a thing the wrong way.

On the whole, the experience speaks eloquently for co-operation between teachers of English and those who teach other subjects. We put our young men and women in artificial situations when we assign themes wholly from literature, or with literary production as the only motive; for few of them will ever be critics, or novelists, or essayists, or poets—except in the English classes. On the other hand, we place them in a perfectly natural situation when we assign themes from the subjects they are studying; for they have daily need of ability to express themselves in these subjects, and the ability is too often lacking. The attainment of the best results in this sort of theme work involves consultation with and criticism from teachers of subjects other than English. Such co-operation tends to intensify the student's feeling of responsibility, it provides for timely assignment of themes, and it gives opportunity for a more accurate judgment of results than the English teacher can reach unaided. He can therefore yield to such practical work much of the time devoted to composition whose motive is purely aesthetic.

CYRUS LAURON HOOPER

CHICAGO TEACHERS COLLEGE
CHICAGO, ILL.

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A HINT FROM THE NEWSPAPER OFFICE[1]

Some of the problems involved in the teaching of English composition have now been solved; some are still unsolved. I was reminded of one of the former by an editorial article that appeared recently in a Chicago paper. The editor, commenting on Professor Lounsbury's views on involuntary composition, gravely rebuked the teachers of English in both high schools and colleges for adhering to the old abstract themes, "War," "Peace," "Virtue," and the like. It is high time, he said, that these worn-out subjects give way to something more live, concrete, and interesting. Why should not topics be drawn from the student's experiences and occupations? Let him write on something that he has observed with his own eyes, heard with his own ears, made with his own hands; and so on, and so on.

Well, here was an instance where the unfortunate editor—who could not, after all, be expected to know everything—had unwittingly put his foot in it. If there is one thing more than another that has marked the teaching of composition during the past twenty years, it is the substitution of the concrete for the abstract. In the search for live and interesting topics, the whole field of sense-perception has been ransacked. Textbooks on composition are simply bursting with concrete material. In fact the movement has gone to such an extreme that there are now signs of a counter-revolution. That particular problem, then, may be said to have been solved, with the encouraging result that courses in composition have become, to put it mildly, much less irksome to both pupil and teacher than they were formerly.

But there are other problems that are yet far from a solution. Of these, one of the most difficult is the problem of theme-correction. How can the teacher read and criticize and reread the thousands of pages of written work that are produced every month in every composition class, without danger to his health or his sanity? The only solution that has been thus far prepared is the multiplication of teachers to the point where the burden is proportioned to the teacher's strength; and that method, I fear, will have its bad quarter of an hour when it comes before the financial committee of any school board. For my part, although I see no other way out, I have always cherished the hope that some ingenious mind would, sooner or later, devise a more economical scheme. That this is possible seems to be implied in the experience of those who are trained in newspaper offices. A young man enters the

[1] Reported from the discussions at the December meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English.

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newspaper office as a "cub" reporter. He knows next to nothing about punctuation or grammar, his spelling is reckless, his sentences are amorphous, his ideas about diction mostly wrong; and yet within three or four weeks after he begins his newspaper work these faults will disappear. His writing, if not graceful, will be clear, simple, and correct, and no one will have the slightest difficulty in understanding it. In other words, what the school has labored for three or four years to accomplish and has not accomplished, the newspaper office accomplishes in three weeks.

One of the reasons for the effectiveness of the newspaper training is, of course, apparent to everyone. It is that the theme correction that goes on in the newspaper office is merciless and decisive. The young reporter cannot make the same mistake twice. He either learns and conforms, or he gets out. But other influences must be taken into account—the sense of loyalty to the paper, the satisfaction of being an effective part of a powerful institution, the atmosphere of work in the office, the daily contact with men who are straining every fiber to accomplish well their appointed task; above all, the sense that what one writes will be read by thousands of persons and will in some measure go to shape their thoughts and lives. These things are powerfully stimulating. If we could bring just a fraction of this stimulus to bear upon our students when they write, the problem of theme-correcting would be immensely simplified.

FRED NEWTON SCOTT

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

PASADENA, CALIFORNIA
October 22, 1911

DEAR SIR:

Your circular concerning high-school English has been forwarded to me from the University of Maine. I am deeply interested in these questions and have been studying them for thirty years. Five years ago I shifted my point of attack from the special subject of English to the broader topic of education, since eight years of service as English inspector for the regents of New York had convinced me that radical difficulties in my way lay outside the classroom. For five years I have studied education in this and other countries and have reached certain conclusions that must modify greatly any answers that I would give to your questions.

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1. The elementary school should consist of six grades and its work should have but one goal—the development of the child, not the acquisition of knowledge.

2. An intermediate school should follow and should be distinguished, as in the New York syllabus, as a school preparing for (*a*) the cultural high, (*b*) the agricultural high, (*c*) the industrial high or the vocational school.

3. Your questions should apply to the first class of the intermediate school and to the cultural high school only. There is no getting ahead with this English problem until we segregate our pupils in this way and adapt the discipline in English to the needs of the particular class of school. When this is done most of the difficulties will disappear. For instance, in the cultural intermediate school the pupils will begin French and German (see the New York syllabus). The grammar of English, French, and German will be taught together, and a clear and intelligent knowledge of English grammar will be secured in the two years now covered by the seventh and eighth grades. This will not be difficult when these classes are relieved of the presence of pupils who should never study grammar systematically, these having gone to their own intermediate school.

The same principle would hold through the high-school course. The work of the cultural intermediate school, the cultural high school, and the first two classes of any cultural college course is the same in kind, and all might well be combined in a school similar to the more scientific *Gymnasium* or *lycée* courses. When we rid these classes of pupils who for their own sake should be elsewhere, the problems of English teaching will, in large measure, disappear.

These cultural high schools should be intimately connected with the universities, under university inspection, should have able teachers with fixed tenure of office and good salaries, the students they prepare should be received by the universities on their certificates, and the teachers should suffer if they send poorly prepared students.

In my opinion, here is where the attack should be made; not on the details of method or of examination. We shall never have satisfactory work in English until we secure this reorganization of our schools. We have beaten the air long enough; let us now strike at the root of the difficulty.

Very truly yours,

CHARLES DAVIDSON

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NEWS AND NOTES

MEETING OF THE ENGLISH SECTION OF THE TEXAS STATE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

The general topic of the program for the English section of the Texas State Teachers' Association, which met at Waco, Tex., December 28, 1911, was "The Teacher of English." Dr. L. W. Payne, Jr., of the University of Texas, was in the chair. Dr. Henry L. Hargrove of Baylor University read the first paper on the program, namely, "The Preparation of Teachers of English by the University." He was followed by Professor H. W. Morelock of the West Texas Normal College, with a paper on "The Preparation of Teachers of English by the Normal School." This topic brought forth some lively discussion, the principal contention being that the normal schools should not attempt to prepare special teachers of English for the better class of high schools. Principal B. F. Keith of the Belton High School discussed "Some Problems of the High-School Teacher of English and How to Meet Them." At the conclusion of Mr. Keith's paper the old question of how to lessen the burden of reading themes was threshed out pro and con. Mrs. Mary Pascal of the Fort Worth High School followed with a decidedly interesting paper on "The Special Teacher of English in the Grammar Grades." The chairman for the year then read a paper on "Some Suggestions for Further Culture and Professional Training for the English Teacher."

There were in attendance over one hundred teachers and the interest manifested was highly encouraging. Dr. Henry L. Hargrove of Baylor University, Waco, was elected chairman for the ensuing year.

L. W. Payne, Jr.

Austin, Tex.

TO CERTIFY OR NOT TO CERTIFY

For several years the high-school teachers of New York have been waging determined warfare in the cause of freedom from college domination. Their pamphlet on the *Articulation of School and College* has aroused considerable interest and provoked warm discussion. Recently the English section of the state teachers' association has issued an open letter, in which the disadvantages of the present system of college-entrance requirements and examinations are set forth and specifications

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for entrance requirements and examinations of a better type are offered. The letter is as follows:

An Open Letter to Teachers of English

I. Objections to the present requirements

While we recognize that a great deal has been accomplished by the modern movement toward uniformity in English in the twenty years during which it has been put to the test, we realize at the same time that it has developed such limitations that a step forward is imperatively needed.

We feel that the type of entrance requirement and the type of entrance examination, which are based upon a closed list of books, however comprehensive, are harmful in many ways. For a closed list, when it becomes the basis of examinations, is subject to limitation by school systems, individual schools, and private teachers to a few books which are treated in such a way as to defeat the ends of literary culture. The few books are read in an unnatural manner. Not only is there failure to develop the kind of appreciation sought for by writers of books, but there is engendered an actual distaste for literary masterpieces and a too narrow conception of the bearing of literature upon life, particularly through the exclusion of contemporary literature which interprets to students the life of their own time.

This restriction has produced too many teachers who have settled down to routine drill on a few books. The result is stereotyped and lifeless treatment of books, and therefore a lowering of the status of the teacher of English.

The close study of books defeats the larger purposes of the teacher of composition by monopolizing too much time for literature, by unduly restricting composition topics to subjects connected with texts, and by failing to utilize the priceless opportunity of dealing at first hand with the vital problems which lie directly within the experience of pupils, or which contribute directly to their future well-being.

As a direct consequence of this intensive and routine method of treatment, the schools have been swamped by over-annotated editions of a few of the most used texts in the prescribed lists, to the exclusion of a wide range of inexpensive books covering the whole field of English literature.

II. What the aims of the requirements should be

The dominant aims of constructive English work should be, in the opinion of your committee, of three kinds: linguistic, cultural, and ethical.

A. First, school courses should give pupils a workmanlike command of the tools of language for whatsoever purpose they may need to be used. This aim is fundamental and vital because upon it is based the power to gain a livelihood and to become social beings.

B. The second class of motives should be those of literary culture, a culture which should include, besides the study of classic forms, the attempt to stand-

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ardize the taste of the pupils in regard to the theater, fiction, song, and periodic literature, the prevailing contemporary forms of culture and amusement.

C. The third group of aims should be ethical, for through English it should be possible to form correct habits of thought and to cultivate judgment, to present ideals of conduct and character, and to develop the sense of relationship to society in the present and the past.

III. THE FORM OF COLLEGE ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

The basis of college and state examinations that would best afford the means of developing the three types of aims set forth above would be, in our opinion, these:

A. An *open list* of one or two hundred *recommended* books, both classical and contemporary, which would afford a familiarity with each of the great literary types. This list should include lyric poems of various types, narrative poetry (ballads and longer poems), epic poetry, the short story, the novel, biography, travel, adventure, the essay, the oration, and the drama. The requirements should therefore involve some breadth of reading, some variety of reading, and some evidence of judicious intensive reading. The schools should, moreover, be urged to offer proper opportunity to relate the standards acquired in reading the classics to contemporary writing in newspaper, magazine, fiction, theater, and popular song.

B. The requirements in written and oral composition should be such as to compel the student to think clearly and to express himself clearly on all subjects on which it is needful or desirable for him to think or to express himself. Such a range of subjects would include:

1. Personal themes, through which teachers may reach the individual pupil and give dignity and meaning to his interests. Such themes might deal with taste in amusements, vocational tendencies, personal experiences, friendships, etc.

2. School themes, through which the great mass of written and spoken English in other subjects in the curriculum and in the student's activities shall fall into relation as part of his English expression: notebooks and reports in other subjects, notices of school activities, the school journal, school songs, discussions and debates on school problems, and school entertainments, should become an integral part of the English work.

3. Community themes, through which the pupil may come into contact with social interests, studies of noteworthy features of city, town, or government, and of public happenings and movements. Such subjects might often be stimulated by prizes given outside the school.

4. Literary themes, through which the pupil's taste may be developed: subjects taken from books read in and out of school, from drama, vaudeville, moving picture, and newspaper; imitative writing by which insight is gained into literary craftsmanship, including verse as well as prose; simple dramatiza-

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tions of stories read by the entire class; letter writing, social and business, made as real as possible.

IV. THE REQUIREMENT IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

That is, in such technical subjects as grammar, spelling, punctuation, use of the dictionary, derivation of words and the like, while aiming at a high ideal, should call for only such a grade of attainment as is commensurate with the age and ability of graduates of secondary schools.

V. THE REQUIREMENT IN ORAL EXPRESSION

Should call for time spent in high school that will ensure the ability on the part of the high-school graduate—

A. To read at sight a prose or a poetical passage of reasonable difficulty with accuracy and effectiveness, and

B. To talk intelligently and in good English for a few minutes on some simple, assigned topic.

ELLEN E. GARRIGUES, *President*
EDWIN FAIRLEY, *Secretary*
EDWARD J. BAILEY
E. R. CLARK
PERCIVAL CHUBB
ADAH H. FOX
THEODORE C. MITCHILL
Executive Committee

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION OF ENGLISH TEACHERS AT ITS MEETING IN TEACHERS COLLEGE, DECEMBER, 1909

I. This association affirms its conviction that any requirements for college or for the granting of the Regents Academic Diploma should be such as to lead to the best preparation for graduation from high school.

II. The requirement in English for graduation from high school, for entrance to college, and for the Academic Diploma, should consist of the following tests:

1. A test of the pupil's power of written expression by one or more compositions on subjects suggested by the personal experience or the general information of the candidate.

2. A test of the range and quality of the reading of the pupil and of his power of literary appreciation by means of: *a*) The answering of a number of simple suggestive questions on standard texts not previously prescribed; *b*) The explanation of two out of three or four passages of prose or poetry of ordinary difficulty, selected from books not to be previously prescribed.

3. A test of the candidate's power of oral expression by reading aloud and conversing.

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These resolutions were presented, it will be remembered, to the National Council of Teachers of English in December, 1911,[1] and were referred to the Board of Directors for modification. The following substitute resolution has been submitted to the Board, with the results indicated below.

Resolved: (1) That the Council draw the attention of examiners in English to the protest of the New York State Association of English Teachers, adopted at its meeting of December, 1909, and embodied in a pamphlet entitled *An Open Letter to Teachers of English;* (2) That it is the sense of the Council that if examinations in English for admission to college are to be held at all, the tests suggested in this circular will obviate many of the present evils; (3) That the ends desired by the New York State Association can be attained most simply and directly by the general adoption of a system of certification.

MR. AITON: "I am in hearty sympathy with the proposed resolution. The resolutions offered by Mr. Clarke suggest a vast improvement upon the practice of the regents' and other eastern examinations, but I am glad to have the Central West take a position in favor of certification."

MISS BARBOUR: "I heartily approve of the resolution."

MR. BASSETT: "I approve."

MISS BRECK: "I approve unreservedly of the substitute resolution."

PROFESSOR CLAPP: "I approve the resolution."

PROFESSOR COX: "I am in favor of the resolution. We have a system of certification in West Virginia."

MR. COULTER: "I do not see any objection to the revised resolution. I think, if I were writing it, I should substitute for the words, 'tests suggested in this circular,' the words, 'tests similar to those suggested in this circular.'"

MISS DARLING: "I approve the resolution."

MR. DOREY: "I saw the New York resolutions some time ago, approve of their stand, and, in consequence of the proposed resolution."

PROFESSOR GREENOUGH: "I vote affirmatively on 1 and 2 and negatively on 3. I beg to call attention to the fact that the Harvard entrance examination in English under the new plan embodies all of the suggestions of the New York State Association of Teachers except the test of oral composition. That test I favor and hope ultimately to establish."

PROFESSOR HOPKINS: "Resolution approved."

MR HUNTING: "I much prefer the amended form of the resolution. I wish to lend all my influence to that form of organized recognition of

[1] See the *English Journal* for January, 1912, pp. 36 and 37.

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high-school work which is free from the cramming tendency, cramming to meet certain restricted requirements rather than vital development of power to do the advanced work of the college or that of practical life. If there is to be any examination for entrance to college let it be of the form suggested."

MRS. HULST: "I approve."

MR. LYNCH: "I have no objection to the resolution. I believe a few masterpieces should be studied by the pupils in all high schools, and if there are examinations some questions should relate directly to what the pupils have studied. I am entirely in favor of the certificate system of admission to college."

MR. MCCOMB: "I do approve of the resolution, provided the emphasis is placed squarely on part 3, certification."

MR. MILLER: "Yes, emphatically."

MR. MITCHILL: "I approve of 1 and 2. I should approve of 3 if it were made to read '*partial* certification.' I still have some doubts about full certification."

PROFESSOR MOTTON: "I approve the resolution."

PROFESSOR NEAL: "Upon division 1 of the resolution I vote emphatically yes. Upon division 2, yes, strongly urging a modification in the wording that will be less suggestive of a campaign against examinations. In division 3 I would insert the phrase 'when local conditions permit,' so that the resolution shall bring our New England section less immediately face to face with the certification proposal. Without such modification I prefer to be recorded as voting no on the third division. Those in the West do not realize, perhaps, the extreme difference there is between their highly developed scheme of state education and the more individualistic scheme of the New England states. It would be one of the worst things that could happen for the New England colleges if certification were to be put into general practice without a considerable period of preparation. We have little or no state supervision; we have no centralized inspection, no visitors. With unrestricted certification, the colleges for some years would be overrun with ambitious and unprepared students. If the high schools are given the opportunity to work freely, they can turn out men qualified to face any examination of the sort described in the open letter. On the other hand, the colleges should be under no compulsion to receive men without subjecting them to a reasonable test of efficiency from the viewpoint of the particular college, with the open-letter plan of requirements as a basis."

MISS PEAKE: "I very thoroughly agree with parts 1 and 2 of the

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resolution. Theoretically I agree with part 3 and believe it would work well in our larger high schools, but the others, I fear, are not yet ready for such a measure."

MR. PITTENGER: "I approve."

PROFESSOR SCOTT: "The resolution expresses my sentiments exactly."

MR. POWERS: "I am in favor of this resolution."

PROFESSOR SQUIRES: "The resolution has my approval."

British teachers of English are struggling with the same problems which trouble us in America. The subject of discussion at the annual conference of the English Association, which was held at University College, London, January 12 and 13, was "The Teaching of English Composition in Schools." Mr. F. S. Boas, divisional inspector, who presided, said that there is general agreement (1) that the term "composition" must be interpreted in the broadest possible sense so as to include oral as well as written composition, and that it must be considered in relation to all other allied forms of self-expression—artistic, manual, etc.; (2) that composition is in some respects the most important branch of the English curriculum; and (3) that it is the most difficult of all branches of English teaching. Miss E. A. Ford of Clapham Day Training College deplored the fact that the average boy or girl on leaving school cannot write English. She suggested that the literature lessons may be made more effective in developing the power of expression. Dr. Rouse of Perse School, Cambridge, declared that English composition is the foundation for all other work. Mr. George Sampson emphasized the point that oral composition should be regarded as more than a preparation for writing. In the discussion Dr. Rouse remarked that public examinations were regarded by all the teachers with whom he talked as the chief hindrance to advancement.

Editors of educational journals will feel grateful to Professor Judd for his frank statement concerning educational articles which appears in the *Elementary School Teacher* for February. He points out that there is educational experience of the greatest value going to waste all over the country because teachers and school officers are unable or unwilling to report their doings. Discussions should be impersonal and scientific; they should be definite and concrete; the setting for exercises and devices

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should be provided; and there should be "a general desire to build up a professional educational literature of a high type." Statements of facts, setting forth difficulties as well as favoring conditions, "should be made the basis of suggestions for new investigations which may carry forward in the spirit of practical application the experience already accumulated."

Request has been made for the appointment of the following committees of the National Council of Teachers of English, to report at the next meeting or as soon thereafter as possible: (1) On Grammatical Terminology; (2) on Home Reading of High-School Students; (3) on Types of Organization of the High-School English Course; (4) on Equipment for English Work; (5) on the articulation of the High-School Course in English with the Elementary Course; (6) on the Opinions of High-School and College Graduates as to the Efficiency of Their Training in English; (7) on Pedagogical Investigation with Reference to English.

English teachers, particularly high-school teachers of English should read the article by Percival Chubb on "The Menace of Pedantry in the Teaching of English," which appeared in the *School Review* for January. He attributes much ill success in English instruction to the false assumption that "the discipline of the young in the vernacular should follow the lines of the traditional discipline in the classic languages." This led to the writing of English grammars on classic models and rhetorics with elaborate classifications and terminology. It caused also a "failure to recognize that education in the vernacular must be fundamentally a culture of the ear and the tongue." We must escape, says the writer, from the trammels of academic pedantry and make of English the vital, formative, ethical force which it ought to be.

The March number of the *School Review* will contain an important article on college-entrance requirements by Dean Angell of the University of Chicago.

The program for the annual meeting of the English section of the Michigan Schoolmasters' Club, which will be held at Ann Arbor on Friday, March 29, will be as follows:

"The Novel in the High School." Mr. Benjamin Comfort, Principal of the Case Technical High School, Detroit, Mich., and author of the great historical novel, *Arnold's Tempter*.

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"The Drama League of America." Mrs. A. Starr Best of Evanston, Ill. Mrs. Best is president of the league.

"Our Overworked English Teachers." Professor E. M. Hopkins of the University of Kansas.

"The High School and the College: Their Relations as regards English." Professor James F. Hosic of the Chicago Teachers College, chairman of the National Education Association Committee on College Entrance Requirements in English.

The Chicago Theater Society is meeting with encouraging success in its efforts "for the support of the drama in Chicago and the encouragement of dramatic authorship in America." A hundred men and women have united in guaranteeing the expenses of the season's activities and have engaged the Drama Players to give a series of ten plays in as many weeks. The company has had a very successful season in New York and is being very well received in Chicago.

The repertory is as follows: *The Thunderbolt*, by Pinero; *The Lady from the Sea*, by Ibsen; *The Learned Ladies*, by Molière; *The Voysey Inheritance*, by Granville Barker; *The Passing of the Torch*, by Hervieu; *The Stronger*, by Giacosa; *The Coffee House*, by Goldoni; *The Maternal Instinct*, by Robert Herrick and Harrison Rhodes; *Gold*, by Ancella Hunter; and another new American play, not yet announced.

The Illinois, New England, New York, and Indiana associations are co-operating in the attempt to learn from high-school graduates in what respects their English training has proved inadequate. If others are willing to assist, let them make it known to the secretary of the National Council.

The Springfield (Mass.) *Union* will publish in its Sunday edition industrial news supplied by the class in journalism in the Massachusetts Agricultural College. The material will be drawn largely from industrial aspects of rural life.

All subscriptions to the *English Journal* should begin with the January, 1912, number. Copies of this and the following number have been reserved to meet the demands of those who might, for any reason, be late in ordering.

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REVIEWS

SPELLING EFFICIENCY

Spelling has received relatively more time and energy as a school subject in this country than any other line of instruction. During the early decades of the American elementary schools, spelling was found in every conceivable form and grade of instruction. It was the fundamental prerequisite and means of teaching reading. The words were graded from the single syllable to the strange unheard-of combinations of syllables and sounds. The period contemporary with the writing of Webster's dictionary was a period when the schools were attempting to formulate uniform spelling and pronunciation of words in use by the people. Horace Mann's outburst against "words, words, words" came just when this grind had attained its full height.

It is not strange, therefore, that one finds spelling in recent years subjected to the criticisms of students of education. "The Spelling Grind" names the effort of one investigator to show the futility of the drill in this subject. In *Spelling Efficiency*,[1] Mr. Wallin has applied to the matter a new set of tests and has firmly taken the stand that "drill" is an essential aspect of teaching children to spell. In this he opposes what he calls the "incidental" method, because, first, he thinks that our orthography is too complex to be acquired in an incidental way, and second, that the spelling of a word is a specific habit which must be acquired as other habits are, viz., by drill.

From selected lists of forty or fifty words chosen from those learned by the students a few weeks earlier, the study undertakes to show the relative efficiency in spelling by grades, ages, and sexes, and the possibility of transfer. These lists, dictated to the various groups and written in columns, were read to them in compositions to be spelled in the context. On the basis of the results, Wallin makes these generalizations: (1) The variation from grade to grade is practically negligible, the order of efficiency being 4th grade, 7th, 6th, 5th, and last 8th. (2) Girls are more proficient spellers than boys, especially in the upper grades. (3) The younger pupils ("accelerated") spell better than the normal

[1] *Spelling Efficiency in Relation to Age, Grade, and Sex, and the Question of Transfer.* By J. E. WALLACE WALLIN. Baltimore: Warwick & York, 1911.

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("on-time") pupils, and the over-aged ("retarded") are poorest. (4) Spelling ability acquired in drill or column method is transferable to the spelling in composition.

The study seems to the writer inadequate to answer the questions raised in anything more than a tentative way, and therefore, insufficient grounds on which to base practice in the schools. The author of the study evidently held rather dogmatically to the view that drill is a *sine qua non* in acquiring spelling, consequently, the study "proves" this thesis. The more important question of *locus* or place for emphasis upon formal spelling drill is not answered, either for grade or age. In the nature of the tests very little can be judged, in spite of the author's conclusions, as to the transferability of a particular skill, because, for one thing, the essential element used in the two methods is identical in the procedures, the words in both cases being dictated for the child to write. Mr. Wallin seems to have read more into the proposition of *transfer* from general psychological and physiological considerations of habit formation than he did from the specific study.

As a tentative study, preliminary to further investigation along this line, the work is of great value in the control of educational practice.

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ENGLISH TAUGHT INDUCTIVELY

There is probably no teacher of English who would deny that the elementary schools fall short of accomplishing what should be their purpose, to give every pupil passing through them a working command of his most important tool, the English language. "The American voice" and slovenly habits of speech have been accepted as inevitable. The complaints from the business world and the secondary schools are too well known to need repetition. There are few, if any, other lines of work in which similarly faulty products would not have forced, long ago, a change of method in production. With a language flexible and growing we have used a method of instruction rigid and without growth.

We have seen in the natural sciences the result of the laboratory method, with its hypotheses and experiments. May not these be incorporated in the elementary teaching of English? Let the child learn to speak correctly while speaking of the things which possess a natural interest for him. Let him learn to write by much writing.

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Let him derive from his own experiments the principles which govern the correct use of the language.

It would be no more unreasonable to expect a child to perform correctly upon the piano without hours of patient practice, of technical instruction, than it is to expect a well-modulated voice and distinct enunciation without frequent periods of systematic drill and conscious effort.

The schools aim to develop a love of literature, but all teachers have seen masterpieces dissected to furnish examples of peculiar construction. Poems which should have sung themselves into the heart have been used to illustrate technical grammar, whose only use in an elementary school should be to test and correct habits of speech.

The English teacher who is breaking away from traditional methods and looking about for a guide can find it in the Cabell-Freeman series of books on English,[1] which have been adopted by the Chicago Board of Education. They are texts to be placed in the hands of the children. Book I is for the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades, Book II for the seventh and eighth. In both the emphasis is placed on oral language. They are almost exhaustless fields of material, not only because of what they offer teachers and pupils in the books themselves but also because of possibilities they suggest outside of their covers.

Book I contains well-organized work to secure breath control, proper tone production, and elasticity of the organs involved in speech. The power so gained is directly applied to the material for oral expression. Science, art, and literature furnish topics for discussion; and so carefully have the authors made their selections that children gladly claim them as their own.

Book II continues the activities started in Book I. There is a logical sequence in the work. Here technical grammar has taken the position of shedding light instead of requiring it.

The recurrence of the autumnal theme marks the beginning of each grade's work. At first, it seemed a flaw that the work for the various grades was not definitely divided into distinct sections. This, in use, has proved to be an advantage, as it is possible to go without friction or explanation to any part of the book, according to the need of the class.

JUNE H. MACCONKEY

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[1] *English*, Books I and II. By ELVIRA D. CABELL and VIRGINIA W. FREEMAN. Chicago: William F. Roberts Co., 1911.

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BOOK NOTICES

[Mention under this head does not preclude review elsewhere.]

Popular Studies in Mythology, Romance, and Folklore. General Editor, MR. ALFRED NUTT. London: David Nutt, 1908. 6*d.* net, each.

No. 1, *Celtic and Mediaeval Romance.* By ALFRED NUTT. No. 2, *Folklore: What Is It and What Is the Good of It?* By E. S. HARTLAND. No. 3, *Ossian and the Ossianic Literature Connected with His Name.* By ALFRED NUTT. No. 4, *King Arthur and His Knights.* A Survey of Arthurian Romance. By JESSIE L. WESTON. No. 5, *The Popular Poetry of the Finns.* By CHARLES L. BILLSON, M.A. No. 6, *The Fairy Mythology of Shakespeare.* By ALFRED NUTT. No. 7, *Mythology and Folktales: Their Relation and Interpretation.* By E. S. HARTLAND. No. 8, *Cuchulainn, the Irish Achilles.* By ALFRED NUTT. No. 9, *The Rigveda.* By E. VENNON ARNOLD, LITT.D. No. 10, *The Romance Cycle of Charlemagne and His Peers.* By JESSIE L. WESTON. No. 11, *The Mabinogion.* By IVOR B. JOHN, M.A., Fellow of the University of Wales. No. 12, *The Edda:* I, "The Divine Mythology of the North." By WINIFRED FARADAY, M.A. No. 13, *The Edda:* II, "The Heroic Mythology of the North." By WINIFRED FARADAY, M.A. No. 14, *The Legend of the Holy Grail.* By ALFRED NUTT. No. 15, *The Cycle of Dietrich of Bern.* By F. E. SANDBACH. No. 16, *The Popol Vuh.* The Mythic and Heroic Sagas of the Kiches of Central America. By LEWIS SPENCE.

A most useful series for the general reader. Each volume contains an extensive bibliography. Nos. 1 to 12 have been issued in two volumes.

Three Middle English Romances. Retold by LAURA A. HIBBARD. London: David Nutt, 1911. Pp. x+149. 2*s.* net.

Not a literal translation. The attempt is to convey the spirit of these popular tales. The choice of romances was determined by the desire to represent the native element in English romance. Contents: King Horn; Havelok; Sir Beves of Hampton.

The Study of Celtic Literature. By MATTHEW ARNOLD, with introduction, notes, and appendix by ALFRED NUTT. London: David Nutt, 1910. Pp. xlii+189. 3*s.* 6*d.* net.

In view of the Celtic revival a timely book. The editor's notes are useful in calling attention to recent studies in the field in comparison with Arnold's.

Old Testament Narratives. By GEORGE HENRY NETTLETON. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1911. Pp. xxxvii+294.

The text is that of the Authorized Version of 1611. The editor provides an introduction giving the history of the English Bible.

Specimens of Letter-writing. By LAURA E. LOCKWOOD and AMY R. KELLY. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1911. Pp. xli+274.

Eighty authors are represented, beginning with Walter Paston and ending with Lewis Carroll and T. B. Aldrich. The volume will be useful in college classes.

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Selections from Johnson. By CHARLES GROSVENOR OSGOOD. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1909. Pp. lx+479.

A very good and fairly ample selection.

The Golden Treasury. By FRANCIS T. PALGRAVE, edited with an introduction and further notes by ALLAN ABBOTT, A.M. New York: Charles E. Merrill Co., 1911. Pp. 545.

The First Series in good type and provided with an essay on lyric poetry, summaries of the books, notes, topics for study, and indexes.

Idylls of the King. By TENNYSON, edited with an introduction and notes by W. D. LEWIS, M.A. New York: Charles E. Merrill Co., 1911. Pp. 212.

The Coming of Arthur, Gareth and Lynette, Lancelot and Elaine, Guinevere, and *The Passing of Arthur,* with connecting links, notes, questions, and glossary. The introduction will be very helpful to teachers.

The Odyssey. Books vi–xvi, xviii–xxiv. The translation of THEODORE A. BUCKLEY, M.A. Edited by EDWIN FAIRLEY. New York: Charles E. Merrill Co., 1911. Pp. 327.

Books vi to xxiv, with the omission of Books xv to xvii. The editor, besides revising the translation, has supplied a brief introduction, notes, suggestive questions, and a glossary.

Macaulay's Life of Samuel Johnson. By CLINTON W. LUCAS. New York: American Book Co., 1910. Pp. 80.

Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet." Edited with introduction and notes by WILLIAM STRUNK, JR. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1911. Pp. xxv+129.

The text is that of the Cambridge edition of Professor Neilson.

Milton's "Of Education, Areopagitica, The Commonwealth." With Early biographies of Milton, introduction, and notes by LAURA E. LOCKWOOD. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1911. lxxxvi+205.

Cooper's "The Spy." With introduction and notes by CHARLES SWAIN THOMAS. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1911. Pp. xxii+434.

The distinctive feature of this edition is the excellent notes and questions for study, which were worked out by a class of pupils in the Newton (Mass.) High School.

Expository Writing. By MAURICE GARLAND FULTON. New York: Macmillan, 1912. Pp. xxxvii+555.

An ample selection of specimens to illustrate (1) general principles, and (2) special processes of expository writing, prefaced with a summary of the theory of exposition. Questions for study follow each of the seventeen sections.

English Prose Composition. By EDWARD FULTON. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1911. Pp. viii+317.

An outline of rhetorical theory with numerous specimens of exposition, argumentation, narrative, and description, grouped under two main heads. 1. Writing Which Aims to Enlighten or Convince. 2. Writing Which Aims to Please.

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The Writing of News. A Handbook, with Chapters on Newspaper Correspondence and Copy Reading. By CHARLES G. ROSS. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1911. vii+236.

To be reviewed.

Speech-making: Explicit Instruction for the Building and Delivery of Speeches. By EDWIN GORDON LAWRENCE. New York: A. S. Barnes Co., 1912. Pp. ix+254.

Theme-Book in English Composition. By ALFRED M. HITCHCOCK. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1910. Pp. v+113.

An extremely suggestive practice book in English composition for first and second year high-school pupils.

Composition in Narration. By JOSEPH RUSSELL TAYLOR. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1910. Pp. 129.

An attempt at simplification, but too carelessly written to arouse confidence.

The British Museum: Its History and Treasures. By HENRY C. SHELLEY. Boston: L. C. Page & Co., 1911. Pp. vii+353. Illustrated.

A handsome volume descriptive of one of the most interesting places known to the student of English.

The Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. By HELEN W. HENDERSON. Boston: L. C. Page & Co., 1911. xvi+383. Illustrated.

Companion to the above and gratifying in the wealth it presents.

The Progressive Road to Reading. Books I–IV and Teacher's Manual. By GEORGINE BURCHILL, WILLIAM L. ETTINGER, and EDGAR DUBS SHIMER. New York: Silver, Burdett & Co., 1910. Illustrated.

Literature in the Common Schools. By JOHN HARRINGTON COX. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1910. $0.90 net.

A very useful book for teachers in the elementary schools. The author combines the statement of ideals and practical suggestions for realizing them in a very effective way.

One-Year Course in English and American Literature. By BENJAMIN A. HEYDRICK. New York: Hinds, Noble & Eldredge, 1909. Pp. vii+289.

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THE ENGLISH JOURNAL

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THE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY OF HIGH-SCHOOL ENGLISH

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To the student of educational conditions, the American high school offers at the present moment a most interesting problem. A period of radical reconstruction is drawing to a close. An era of organization is at hand. Just as the reconstruction was brought about by forces beyond the power of the institution and its leaders to stay or withstand, so the imminent process of organization will be shaped by equally powerful and determining factors in our national and social life. The efforts of individual writers and teachers as well as those of institutions and organized bodies will be effective only as they embody a recognition of the significance and meaning of these formative changes. Anyone who attempts to deal with the curriculum of the American high school, or any subject in the curriculum, with any seriousness, proceeds from an analysis, either implicit or avowed, of the educational situation by which he is confronted. It is not, therefore, a proof of unusual courage or of unpardonable naïveté, that one prefaces a discussion of the position of English in the high-school curriculum with the mention and discussion of what he deems the fundamental considerations demanding recognition. It is but natural that, as we think of the late curriculum which has given way to the new, we should ask ourselves what there was good about it, so good that it lasted with but slight variations for four hundred years and served to carry most of the educators of this generation through

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the period of their high-school growth. This question has been asked innumerable times, and has received all sorts of answers. Some of these answers, wrought out in the heat of the controversy waged over the subject during the past half-century and more, have become accepted as the standard articles of the creed of the conservative. And just as each answer bade fair to become the answer for the conservative, it became the object of attack by the combined forces of the radicals and innovators. The result of this long controversy is that we are in possession of a number of pretty well-defined educational topics for debate, with a mass of arguments, thoroughly worked out for both the positive and negative sides, with a splendid list of references to literature, educational and otherwise, and with a secondary list of cross-references showing just which argument on the one side is the sure antidote or antitoxin for its counterpart on the other. To attempt, therefore, to answer this question anew would seem an inexcusable presumption. Nevertheless some sort of answer we must give ourselves. It is simply incredible that there is no bridge from the old to the new. Human experience does not leave off and begin again anew in that fashion. Some things surely we ought to be able to name that were true of the old curriculum which we must expect to find or make true of the new, if it is going to serve its purpose with anything like the success of the old.

Now the discussions of the old curriculum pro and con referred to above have attempted to uncover its worth or inadequacy by showing either what it was or what it did. That is to say, they sought to evaluate it either as *content* or as *function*. It need hardly be pointed out that these two criteria ought not to be separated in their application and, in fact, are not really separable. The only justification, therefore, of the separation is one of practical convenience in making an analysis of a complicated subject. It was a fundamental mistake on the part of the advocates of the old curriculum when they tried to base their claims on either standard of value as independent of the other. The old curriculum was valuable both as content and as function, both for what it was and what it did. When it failed to meet both tests at the same time it was doomed. And this, historically, is just what has happened.

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The content of the old course ceased to have the value for the education of the day that warranted its monopoly of the whole field. Losing its peculiar value as educational content, for what it *was*, it was retained for almost a century in spite of constant attacks for its educative function, for what it *did*. Those who believe that *the* new or *a* new curriculum can meet the requirements of the present as well as the old met those of the past, will need to show that the new really takes the place of the old. Those, on the other hand, who look back with regret on the loss of the old, ought, in the interests of education and progress, to be ready to see how the new may be made to do the work of the old. It may be well for us briefly, then, to consider the value of the old curriculum from a broadly educational standpoint.

As an educational instrument the classical curriculum had its own value as content. That is to say, while it brought in its train a series of postponed values, its chief educational value was immediate and vital in the experience of the young students who were working with it. This is not the usual justification offered for use or retention of the classical curriculum. Our educative literature is replete with arguments which seek the value of the classical curriculum in outside and derivative uses. All of these arguments, well known and hackneyed as they are, have just the worth of the claims that they set up. They are true, in fact, but not adequate as supports for continuing the old practice. The classical curriculum at the dawn of modern scholarship and educational endeavor was, historically, the only possible curriculum. It put the student into possession of the languages and literature through the control of which alone one could enter into the social heritage of the day. All the higher interests of mankind were conserved and made available for the modern world in them. Not only had one to seek knowledge there, but standards and ideals. In law, in medicine, in theology, in philosophy, in science, in logic, in rhetoric, in civics, in agriculture, in architecture and engineering, in literature, it was true as it has never been true since, that the way of the classics was the way into life. But this very necessity of going to the classics to get insight into contemporary as well as past life was destined to bring about a development in all lines of human

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endeavor that would inevitably make that necessity less and less. The great historic foundations remain as ever in antiquity. But it is less and less necessary to go back to these foundations in order to act effectively, or to live largely within any field of human activity. At the dawn of the modern movement the historical test was the only test of the permanent and stable in the social and scientific realms. Today experimentation in both fields has wrought out new methods of investigation and new criteria of value. Then, the past gave not only the history of the problem, but its solution as well. Today, the past yields only the history of the problem; its solution is attained by the use of new methods. This is another way of saying that we have built up a modern culture, with its roots in the past, to be sure, but of sufficient independence and novelty to warrant and demand our first concern. Under these modern conditions, therefore, the claim that the old curriculum should be retained as a basis for professional or cultural training is quite a different claim from that which might have been set up even a century ago. The classical curriculum has not the social value as content that it once had. What *educational* value as content it possessed and still possesses will be brought out later.

When the consciousness of this changed situation extended to the professional educators, the line of defense was shifted from the content of the curriculum to its educational function, from what it *was* to what it *did*. The result was the long-established and highly honored argument as to the disciplinary value of the old curriculum. The classical curriculum trained a student's mind as no other subjects or subject could. It is not necessary for us to discuss the various forms of this argument. Like the argument for content, it had its foundation in fact, but was not destined to prove adequate. As a matter of strategy, it was a fatal move on the part of those who offered it, in that it risked the outcome of the battle on the outcome of a minor movement. The opponents of the doctrine of discipline transferred the discussion to the field of psychology, where the battle seems now to have taken on a somewhat modified form. But the issue of this latter contest is of little moment for the present discussion, inasmuch as the problem it raised has been shoved aside as immaterial rather than settled.

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For all along the adherents of the old curriculum have been aware that there was a larger and truer basis for their claims than was comprised in any one of their arguments taken singly, or in all of them put together.

With this brief review of the century-long effort to work out a defensible theory of the educational value of the classical curriculum, we return to our former statement that that value was inherent and realized in the experience of the student while occupied with it. This means that its content was not valuable because it could be useful at some other time and in some other activity, however true that might prove to be; that its function in the life of the student was not to store up a fund of discipline to be available in other situations, even if that might be. The old curriculum supplied a content to, and performed a function in the experience of, the student that was unique, immediate, and permanent, and this service made that curriculum truly educative. Let us try to realize what that service was.

There are three fundamental features of the old curriculum which made it educative, independent of time or condition. The first of these is that it was a *humanistic* education. In the last analysis, there is no other education than a humanistic education. This is not a mere tautology, or a straining after rhetorical effect. The whole process of education is a learning by experience. Part of that experience is direct, immediate, and individual. Part is indirect, mediate, and social. Our direct experience comes to us through direct contact with our physical or social world. The objects are the stimuli which give rise to our images and ideas. Limited to direct experience, we should live within the range of our own physical habitat, organize our impulses as our own environment dictated, and fashion our ideals with at best a provincial outlook. Indirect experience comes to us refined and organized by the efforts and aspirations of others, reveals to us the meaning and scope of our inmost springs of action, and places at our disposal the ideals of the race. Direct experience gives us the indispensable raw material of life. Indirect experience interprets, evaluates, organizes this raw material. Now, these two kinds of experience do not come to us as two, each referred to its source and

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carefully discriminated. It is all one continuous experience, save as we adopt critical attitudes of reflection, or artificial attitudes of research and investigation. Education is the process of insuring to the individual an adequate supply of both types of experience so that he may live a larger, better life. The history of education reveals movements in the direction of increasing the one or the other, when the two have got out of balance. The modern movement with its slogan of "things not words" had its rise in a period when the schools had failed to insure to the pupils adequate direct experience. So our emphasis on motor-training and science is but a refined and up-to-date method of recognizing in our school practice this fundamental need. And let us not only acknowledge but insist once for all that the sciences are indispensable methods of control of experience and therefore an indispensable part of any education. Nevertheless, we must recognize that these same sciences deal each with a certain range of experience and with certain methods of control to secure definite and particular ends. No one science attempts the task of fitting its own result into the total of the experience of the individual. Nay, even our psychology does not attempt this for the pupil. We have our child psychology, our genetic psychology, our educational psychology or psychologies. They are written for teachers. They aim at a system of control of child life from outside; they give us an art of manipulation. Meantime, the children live and learn to live. They borrow the experience of others and test it in their own. They learn the meaning and value of their experiences as they find it reflected in that of others. Now, the truest and most intimate form in which the experience of others is communicated to us is that of language. Even for objects and events of the outer world, while it does not take their place in direct experience, language gives us the best account of them as experienced. And for our feelings, our aspirations and longings, our resolutions and intentions, language alone carries them out into the world of our fellow-men. We can compare our own inner life with that of others only through the meaning of language. For this reason alone, we may rest confident that the education of the young will always consist in adequate measure of the study of language. But why not get language training in

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discussing history, mathematics, science, and what not? Certainly the language is used in dealing with these experiences. More than that cannot be expected. But life is bigger, even for a child, than the sciences. It does not go on for him in terms of the sciences. His life is a total, a whole. Break it up for explanation and control, if you will, into experiences regulated and explained by the sciences. It will go on as before as a whole. We have not the sciences available to explain it piece by piece, much less the total as it shifts and changes. Now, the form in which language best preserves and makes available the experience of others is literature. We need fix no limits to the meaning of this word. Let it stand as indicating what is written and accessible. The principle holds good. If it is scientific experience that we want, we may turn to the *Journal of Mathematics*, the *Chemische Annalen*, the *Astrophysical Journal*. If we wish to know how men have thought, felt, and aspired, we turn to literature. And we need take no man's word for the truth of the account. The world has subjected it to its age-long test and given its *imprimatur*. So literature is the truest and most universal method of communicating experience; not all kinds of experience, but that kind that we all most need in youth, in manhood, and in old age to enable us to identify ourselves with our kind, to detect the peculiar likeness of another's life to ours, to find the revelation of our yet unformed resolves in the governing ideals of another's mind. It was because the classical curriculum, as organized and administered, in spite of patent defects and short-comings on the part of its advocates, did thus enlarge, ennoble, and refine the lives of the young. that it survived the attacks of its opponents as well as the defenses of its friends. Whatever educational means is adopted in its place must meet this supreme test: it must *humanize* those who come under its influence.

The second characteristic of the old curriculum lies in the fact that it provided for *continuity* of experience. It would hardly seem necessary to enter into an exposition of this fundamental educational requirement. Whatever may be said in criticism of the old curriculum as organized, or administered, the fact remains that for a number of years the minds of the pupils dealt with a material

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which provided unlimited opportunity for utilizing their past achievement and attainment in the solution of new problems, so that each new solution gave the satisfaction of victory and the immediate realization of meaning and value. The result was not merely a relative mastery of a given subject-matter, but a sense of power, a self-mastery. The argument here is not that no other curriculum could be devised which would produce this result, nor that the old curriculum was better adapted to this end than any other conceivable or actual curriculum, but that the classics as studied did, as a matter of fact, provide this continuity of effort and experience. Moreover, no modern curriculum can be regarded as a substitute which fails to measure up to this requirement. One of the unhappy results of the piecemeal fashion in which the modern course of study has been introduced is that this principle has been overlooked. Each new study has been accepted on the basis of its own individual value, whether great or small, while but little or no regard has been paid to the system that was destroyed, or to the chaos that was introduced. By way of contrast, call to the mind the mosaic of the modern course as fashioned by conflicting interests or determined by the pupil under the elective system, and the advantage of the old, in this respect, will be apparent.

The third characteristic of the old curriculum was its *organizing* power. It should be recognized that this power grew largely out of the two facts that have already been discussed. Nevertheless, it is distinguishable as a result in the mind of the pupil, and serves to emphasize a fundamental requirement to be demanded of any substitute. Organization of the individual is the end of education viewed as a process of growth. Between birth and the attainment of essential maturity, the instincts, impulses, capacities, tastes, ideals of the individual must be brought into some sort of a working system. The pupil through his school experience must be got together. He must be made conscious of his own control over himself. It would be foolish to claim that no other school curriculum could produce this result. It would be equally absurd to deny that one can attain to such an organization of one's self without any schooling. The contention is that for centuries the use of the

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old curriculum had this very patent effect for those who passed through it. Perhaps this fact, more than any other, accounts for the tenacity with which those who were educated under the old system maintained its value in the face of the fiercest criticism. Men came out of the experience organized. They might be confused by the challenge to show the utility of the specific knowledge gained. They might be embarrassed by the consciousness of ignorance in new and important fields. What they did have was a sense of self-knowledge and self-mastery, the ability to take *themselves* over into new situations. So long as the knowledge they gained in school was the knowledge that the world wanted, this more essential result of their training was obscured. For this reason, the men trained in the old system were men able to take their whole selves as organized over into the new fields of the sciences and do constructive pioneer work. For the same reason the modern attack on the disciplinary result of the older studies is quite beside the mark. Whether we shall finally decide that power in one line is transferable or not; whether we shall prove that a habit of doing one thing can, presto change, be made to function as a habit of doing something else or not, the fact is that the man trained under the old system could work effectively under the demands of the customary world and hold himself together while remaking habits to meet new situations. And this ability is the fundamental index of power. If a new system, or the new system, of education can effect this result while it fits the young directly for the demands of the modern world, it will indeed be a substitute for the old.

Assuming as true what seems to be a fact, that the old curriculum has passed away as the typical curriculum for the high school, we naturally ask what study or studies can most nearly and really take its place. It is the purpose of this paper to indicate the writer's belief that a course in English alone can be expected to do the three things for the pupils that have been mentioned as the merits of the old curriculum. It would hardly seem necessary to argue the point further. It need scarcely be said that this suggestion does not imply the elimination of the newer subjects from the curriculum, nor their subordination to English. It simply means

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that the course of study must have a backbone and that English, as we understand the term in the schools, is the only subject that performs this peculiar function. It alone, as literature, can make the course a humanizing agency. It alone offers the opportunity for that continuity of work which makes study educative. It alone is capable of bringing to bear on the pupil that kind of experience, indirect though it be, by which his forming mind and soul may be organized.

The English teachers of America ought to recognize this distinct opportunity. One ought not to apologize to himself for teaching a language, for language is the medium of social expansion and social efficiency. Nor ought one to underestimate the educative value of the vernacular. The English language and literature reflect a life and development within which have been wrought out our standards of taste, our ethical and spiritual ideals, our most permanent judgments, our highest resolves. Because of this weight of sifted experience, it is not only the most accessible, but also the most valuable, language and literature for those who are going to be Americans. No one will be found to deny this. To those who still believe that the best entrance into this inheritance is through some other language or literature, the only answer is, the data for a final decision are not at hand, but that the presumption is against them. At any rate, English is the language of the great social group to which we belong, it is available for all sorts and conditions of pupils, it has within it unique possibilities as an educational instrument. It is not only the privilege but also the duty of educators and teachers to learn how to use this instrument as the old masters of the classics used theirs to equip men and women for the modern world.

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OLD ENGLISH BALLADS IN THE SCHOOL

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The editor of this journal has laid before me some interesting passages from a lecture on the teaching of English, given to the students of Bedford College, a part of London University, by Mr. C. Linklater Thomson. With regard to the suitability of popular ballads for instruction and reading in schools, these quotations from Mr. Thomson sound a discouraging note. He thinks it "a waste of time" to teach such a poem as "King John and the Abbot of Canterbury," a favorite in English schools. He condemns the Robin Hood ballads, not only because the moral of them is bad, involving "some trick played by the outlaws," but also because their style is "inferior to that of the Scottish poems." This inferiority in style, he declares, holds good of nearly all the English traditional, popular ballads, and they are rejected in block; while what Mr. Thomson calls the Scottish poems are praised for that "magic" in their style which is palpably absent from versions south of the Tweed.

It is true that not much can be said in defense of the moral teaching involved in the ballad of "King John and the Abbot of Canterbury." It is true that monk and sheriff fare very ill at the hands of Robin Hood, though I doubt heartily that the story, so capitally well told, could do boys and girls any harm. It is true that Scottish traditional ballads have here and there a quality—"magic" may pass as name for it—seldom found in English versions.

> There is a feast in your father's house—
> *The broom blooms bonnie and so is it fair;*
> It becomes you and me to be very douce—
> *And we'll never gang up to the broom nae mair.*

But to concede the truth of these observations must not mean concession of what seems to be Mr. Thomson's main point; neither morality in matter nor "magic" in style, as Mr. Thomson has

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handled them, can control our decision about the suitability of popular ballads for use in the school. The question of morality should lead at once to ground which his instances do not cover and hardly touch; the question of style depends upon a far more important pedagogical principle. In the present paper I should like to take that higher ethical ground, discuss the deeper principle, and justify the ways of the ballad by a more general test.

The educational value of the ballads in certain respects is obvious. They have simplicity—real and not imitated simplicity; and one need not strain the argument of ontogenesis to show that this survival in form and spirit from the world's childhood of story-telling suits the individual child of today. Ballads make the direct appeal; they are full of repetition at the critical moments, which exactly answers to the child's demand; and they leap over tiresome and "realistic" details. They have no figurative phrases to puzzle and divert attention, little or no metaphor. In Professor Steenstrup's fine phrase, they "talk as a mother to her child." Their rhythm is exact, insistent, memorable. It would indeed be a waste of time to dwell on these features which have tempted so many poets to imitate the popular ballad, and which commend it even to the most careless reader. My main point is that the objectionable features, as Mr. Thomson sees them, point to deeper levels of advantage. When Mr. Thomson deplores a certain disregard of morality in the outlaw-ballads, although he may be right in the particular instance, he fails to note that the great body of ballads, while perfectly "moral" in tone, leave this general question of morality out of the account—a commendable omission when children are in the case. Furthermore, when Mr. Thomson rejects English ballads because they lack "magic" in their style, he fails to note what this means for his main question, what compensating advantages the lack of "magic" may have for young readers. "Magic" is an appeal to emotional experience; in the child's case it is a suggestion, an appeal not to experience, but to imagination and anticipation of experience—a questionable matter. "Magic," too, may be an appeal to reflection, and mainly, as Shelley has noted, to sad reflection. Longfellow, whom one now abuses so unreasonably, both practiced this lyric art and told the secret of it;

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the mood it engendered must "resemble sorrow only as the mist resembles the rain." But are children better for this mist and hint of sorrow? Between the immortal nonsense of

> Hickory, dickory, dock,
> The mouse ran up the clock,

which, to be sure, has simplicity, lilt, and epic interest, but lacks profundity, completeness, and coherence, and the beautiful lines of Blake—

> O sunflower, weary of time!

which sing that pleasing sorrow into the heart, there is safe middle ground—the best popular ballads. They are utterly removed from nonsense; they are utterly unsentimental and unreflective. The ballad of popular tradition does not ask general questions about the evil in our life, the misery of men, the riddle of the painful earth. The ballad does not—save in those exceptional "magic" passages of Scottish lays, mainly amorous, which have already been cited—call up the vague sentiment of love and loss, or practice the "natural" magic, as Matthew Arnold termed it, of lines like these:

> In such a night
> Stood Dido with a willow in her hand
> Upon the wild sea banks and waft her love
> To come again to Carthage. . . . .

Our best and noblest lyric is forever asking those deep questions in terms of this "magic." I should, therefore, like to take away from the reading of children all poems, however high their poetic rank, however simple and convincing their phrase, which stimulate that kind of reflection and appeal to that kind of sentiment; and I should like to put into their places a few carefully selected popular ballads, both for the positive reason that the ballad is singable, objective, simple, energetic, direct in appeal, and for the negative reason that it is unreflective and unsentimental. For children, in a word, the best poetry can be too good.

The process of reform in school reading has been salutary in the main. The principle of selection, excellent in and for itself, has been to form in young children a taste for the noblest and best literature. Nor did one fail to meet the evident objection of

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forcing intellectual appreciation. No piece hard to understand, or involving high questions in philosophy, was put into the child's "reader." Tragedy, of course, was left out—murder, crime, the sordid and the hopeless, the note of despair. But, in a sort of compensation, sentiment was left in—sentiment up and down the scale; not amorous sentiment, to be sure, but the kind that is really decocted from reflection upon the tragedy so carefully excluded in its objective and visible guise, sentiment founded on the misery and baffling fates of man. Now, there are few bad influences upon children so subtle and yet so effective as the forcing of childish sentiment. Boys and girls should never be asked to feel by deputy the sentiment of baffled life, to be led before their time over the tragic path, and so be made to anticipate the loss of their own innocent and eager outlook. No lyric is simpler, none more poignant and true, than Mignon's prayer,

> Vor Kummer altert' ich zu frühe;
> Macht mich auf ewig wieder jung. . . . .

but no child ought to appreciate it. Even Blake's *Songs of Innocence* need sifting. Let us have the *Tiger*, to be sure; but let us have no tears over childhood's tears. To sentiment of their own kind children are entitled; but it ought to be in solution with narrative and pictures, with out-of-door verse, which appeals by its echo of bustle and action, its rhythm, its call to keep step, its fresh, pictorial triumph, its deep color and clear-cut forms.

The ballads, I grant, are full of dire and tragic happenings. So are the soundest nursery-rhymes; so are fairy-tales, folk-tales, earliest epic. But they are not full of dire and tragic sentiment. Death stalks through the nursery with fearful foot, and every playground has its heaps of imaginary slain; but there is no reflection over the causes and the necessity of the ogre's or the witch's cruel deeds, no sentiment over their own destruction, no tears over fate. In the child's mind can be found something of primitive man's attitude toward death. The mere tragic event does not trouble the child, who would as unwillingly accept an account of the world in terms of general beneficence as he would accept an account of it as a mere vale of sorrows and tears. It is a place of action, movement, color; he desires to see it plainly, to see it over and over

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again. Sentiment, "magic" of appeal, can only blur this picture and disturb the young spectator, who, if left to himself, will make no mistake in the labels and will delight in the rough justice of events. Poetic excellence for the child must be obvious and not suggested; and hence not even in the style of a poem is "magic" to be desired.

The traditional ballads meet such needs of the child for his poetic reading. I could instance some very "safe" examples; but I shall rather take a case which seems at first sight to bristle with difficulties. I take "Johnie Cock," called by Mr. Child a "precious specimen of the unspoiled traditional ballad." Johnie may or may not be an outlaw of the extreme type; but he disregards the warning of his mother, hunts the king's deer, and, in defending himself from the attack of the seven foresters, kills them "all but one," while he is sorely wounded himself. He sends a bird to his mother, to tell her of his case and to bid her have him carried home. There is not a touch of sentiment or reflection; but the rough, "working" virtues are there—courage, sympathy of kin, scorn for cowardice and treachery. The wind blows through these verses, the sun shines on them, all is "real"—and yet all is of the primitive world, the child's world of folk-lore and fairy-tale. Wolves are cited as authority on the code of honor in fight; "a little bird" carries tidings.

Through such a medium as this, let children see that strenuous and dangerous and tragic side of life which cannot be hidden from them, but which has no sinister and mournful meaning when so presented. It is infinitely worse to suppress the picture and suggest the sentiment, to evoke an untimely sadness, as so many of the best lyrics do when brought before the child's imaginative vision.

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A PARTIAL SUBSTITUTE FOR THE THEME

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Dare one ask, in these days of assiduous cultivation of the theme, if we are not becoming too superstitious about its values? It is not an infrequent experience to hear a pupil's proficiency in English composition expressed, not by an opinion as to his mental qualifications, but rather by the commercial statement that he has written, during four years, one hundred and thirty-six short themes and thirty-two long themes. Are we to believe that the mere number of themes written is convincing proof of the pupil's skill as a writer? Has all this energy of pupil and of teacher been wisely expended? No one would question the value of the theme employed moderately as an exercise, but when the ideal becomes quantity rather than quality, danger threatens.

Before discussing the case of the pupil, let us consider that of the teacher who has to read several hundred themes each year. Under the conditions that now exist in most of our secondary schools, it is impossible for a teacher to give adequate criticism on every theme she reads. Her splendid devotion is physically unable to accomplish the task which is assigned to her. When we insist that a teacher shall read and correct day after day themes which can offer her only the minimum of intellectual challenge, we are deliberately pursuing a course which encourages the deadening of literary sensibilities and the gradual destruction of the teacher's powers of perception. Teachers of English must be intellectually alert, full of spirit and enthusiasm, quick to discriminate between excellence and inferiority, and they must have that magnetic fund of faith in their pupils which will enable them to lead the shy, the discouraged, even the sullen, young folk triumphantly through the required training. Can a person who is forever reading commonplace, mechanical themes keep individual freshness, energy, and high standards? Will she not pass over

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mistakes in spelling and grammar, will she not be satisfied with perfunctory work, simply because she has grown so used to these things in myriad themes that they no longer rouse her to active protest? The teacher needs to be relieved of some of the burden of reading themes, and she needs the stimulus of constant association with the masters of expression, if she is to train our boys and girls in logical thinking and in discriminating choice of words and phrases.

The situation of the pupil is as unfortunate as that of the instructor, especially if that pupil is just beginning his work in the secondary school. He finds himself required to write a theme every week, a short theme, to be sure, but still something original. There may be little paragons who enjoy the exercise, but the writing of themes is not one of the healthy impulses of normal youth. Such work is done under protest, even when teachers and subjects are most inspiring. A boy may give spontaneous oral description of "How I Went Fishing," but when he is called upon to write an account he recoils, and, becoming stiff and conventional, accomplishes a piece of writing as animated as his fishing-rod. The young person of thirteen or fourteen has no desire to write; he has no illusion of an audience interested in his opinions and observations. Compelled to composition, he grows self-conscious; his natural faculty of expression seems to be partially paralyzed, and if by good luck he blunders upon a suggestive word or a happy form of sentence, he tenaciously clings to it, repeating it not only in one theme but in many. If the teacher cannot make a careful study of each pupil's work, the pupil acquires mannerisms, employs incorrect forms, becomes habituated to certain unfortunate and even wrong ways of writing. Custom hangs upon him, as it does upon anyone who lacks initiative, and who finds scant pleasure in his employment.

Of course, the primary significance of theme writing lies in the fact that the individual boy or girl is taught independence, is given personal responsibility. The opportunity to make trial of one's powers is the most essential part of development. The pupil who does not have to write themes never gains self-possession in the world of letters. It is an absolutely indispensable part of

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the education of young people that they shall learn to express themselves, overcoming stammering and awkwardness in speech as well as in writing. It would be disaster if there were no exercise of the powers of expression, if our young people were freed from the beneficent but tyrannical theme. The greatest difficulty which the pupil has to overcome, as he is led on his way to observation, reflection, narration, description, and exposition, is the difficulty which lies in the fact that he is compelled to make something concrete out of his inner world, when he lacks concrete material. It is a case of too much straw but no clay. What vocabulary have these boys of thirteen; how many adjectives do they use; what is their skill in verbs; do they not believe that *and* and *but* are the only connectives; do they not begin sentences instinctively with *the* or *it?* If boys had the means of expression they would not suffer so keenly from awkward shame over their compositions. They would not feel tongue-tied, chained, and hobbled as they do so often. We give them the minimum of suggestion regarding the basic materials of writing, yet expect them by some occult means to show continued advance in their themes. It is said that young robins who are learning to fly eat twelve feet of worms in twelve hours. Let us begin to think a little more about the food and a little less about the wings of our pupils. Let us ask that for every three themes composed by the pupil there be one piece of writing which shall be a mere slavish copy of a model.

A return to the Dark Ages may seem to be suggested by this method, but mechanical as it appears, the exercise in copying good English will result in immediate benefit to the pupil. Free from the demand for "originality," "enthusiasm," and "imagination," a boy can proceed to work without self-consciousness, yet gain the needed practice in the art of composition. Cheerfulness, a sense of security and, let us hope, a certain amount of curiosity will animate the copyist. Writing with absolute regard for a perfect reproduction of the original, a boy must note spelling and punctuation, whether he wishes to or not. Less emphatic will be his scrutiny of grammar, diction, and style, but if he is urged to consider these things, if he is made to record at the foot of his copy (1) all the new words he has noted, (2) the different ways of

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beginning the sentences, (3) the connectives used in compound and in complex sentences, he will be obliged to think a little about what he is copying, and definite impressions will be made upon him. To follow with utmost precision the sentences of a competent writer, to meet his words and phrases and idioms, gives a boy intimate acquaintance with the manner of good writers.

Is it not our first principle in teaching children to write to give them a good model, and do we not all remember how much help it was to trace the letters which we could not at first form for ourselves? The habit of tracing maps of some country has been found a very successful way of establishing permanent acquaintance with geographical outlines. The wood carver must begin by following exact patterns before he becomes independent, and young artists are taught to copy with utmost faithfulness the work of old masters, until their technical skill is established and they are ready for self-expression. Is it not true that this method of literal imitation of successful writers will fix upon a pupil's mind certain principles and methods which he will gain more quickly and thoroughly than he does by the straining effort of always attempting original creation? Mere reading of good authors does not imprint precise details of composition upon the mind; there must be close work over them, exact reproduction. By requiring every pupil to make two copies of a certain extract, also by expecting him to read and verify the copies made by one of his classmates, we may feel sure essential matters could be brought to his attention. If the members of a class were made responsible for the verification of all these extracts it would relieve the teacher for one week of a heavy burden of reading and would give her the opportunity for closer study of the individual pupil's work. It may be objected that this mechanical exercise will be profoundly distasteful to pupils, but this compassionate observation does not deserve much consideration. We are becoming far too sensitive about the enjoyments of our pupils, we entertain them overmuch, we smooth out difficulties, and we deprive them of the character values as well as of the purely rational values gained from steady application to a task monotonous, difficult, but formative. The complaint is frequently urged against college students that they

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lack power of sustained devotion to a hard task; they expect to be released from intellectual work as soon as their curiosity and enthusiasm are a bit jaded. Easy-going parents, considerate teachers, are robbing our young people of the hardships of scholarly work, thereby endangering the stability and power of endurance of the nation.

The subjects assigned for such exercises must, of course, be chosen with due regard for the interests and intelligence of young people. Every good rhetoric contains examples which may profitably be utilized for this task, but still more satisfactory would be passages chosen from the required reading. *Ivanhoe*, *Treasure Island*, *The Sketch Book*, *Walden*, *Travels with a Donkey*, *The Life of Johnson*, or the *Essay on Burns* are in the hands of classes, and would lend themselves admirably to this device of familiarizing pupils with the very words and phrases and sentences of the masters. Variety must be sought, so that at the end of a year a pupil will have come into intimate relationship with a score or more of successful writers. In this way he will escape mannerisms and too much dependence upon the author's style. If passages which have been discussed in class were chosen, it would be a means of impressing upon pupils the substance as well as the form of the text. When a class has become familiar with the general style of any writer, the exercise of analyzing that style in minute detail will deepen the acquaintance, and will give decided stimulus to the copyists' own manner of composition.

There has been a great deal said in the past about the value of trying to devise imitations of the style of great writers. Stevenson's often-quoted account of the way in which he tried now one style, now another, has stimulated many an ambitious young writer to imitate him. Cardinal Newman, too, recounts his practice: "For myself, when I was fourteen or fifteen, I imitated Addison; when I was seventeen, I wrote in the style of Johnson; about the same time I fell in with the twelfth volume of Gibbon, and my ears rang with the cadence of his sentences, and I dreamed of it for a night or two." This is all very well for aspirants toward success in the world of letters, but for the ordinary pupil it would be most undesirable. Teachers have been known to send young

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pupils home with the command to write a paper in the style of Addison. That is worse, even, than being told to write a theme which will reveal "personality." The ingenuity required for combining new ideas with an old style is something that the ordinary boy does not possess. Let him copy the masters *verbatim et literatim*, and have all the help that comes from close, precise, unimaginative following in the very footsteps of the great. We do not want him to be a brilliant, clever mimic, but a sober, precise workman, who, having learned accuracy and perseverance, has become somewhat familiar with the mechanics of effective writing. Copying an extract from a master's hand is the next best thing to writing it oneself.

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THE WASTE OF UNLEARNING

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The following little one-act play, or, if you prefer, farce, will form the text for this discussion. It is entitled "Chasing an Idea," or, sometimes, "Saved by the Bell."

Scene. Any schoolroom in Anytown, Anystate.

Characters. Miss Anyteacher, who is an earnest, refined young woman of from twenty-two to fifty, plainly attired in a simple linen dress. Several children—Eva, Amy, George, Henry, Mary, etc.

Miss A.: Amy, you may write this sentence on the board: "James's hat is not large enough."

(*Amy writes:* "James' hat is not large enough.")

Miss A.: That does pretty well, dear; but who sees what is wrong?

(*Business of raising hands on the part of eight or ten children. Whispered cries of* "Miss Anyteacher, let me!")

Miss A.: Very well, George; what is it?

George: The last word is spelled wrong. It ought to be *enuf*.

(*Furious waving of hands by pupils, some of whose faces are fairly contorted, as with pain.*)

Miss A. (patiently): Yes, dear, some people spell it that way, and some—What is it, Henry?

Henry (at bursting point): But *why* do they spell it that way when it's *wrong?*

Miss A.: They don't think it's wrong; you see—

Henry: But it *is* [with finality]. Last year—

Miss A.: I know, Henry, dear; and we'll spell it *enough* in this class. Well, Mary?

Mary: There's something else. *James'* isn't right. It ought to be *James's.*

Miss A.: Yes, Mary is right. You may change it, Amy.

Amy (firmly): I spelled it the way we spelled it last year. (*Perplexed looks on part of pupils. Murmurs of whispered disbelief on part of Amy and George. General nodding and shaking of heads. Several hands still in the air.*)

Miss A.: Lucy?

Lucy: My papa is a school teacher himself, and he doesn't put any *e* on *large.* (*Business of much gasping and amazement at the insurgency of Lucy's parent.*)

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Miss A.: **Yes, Lucy, I know. Some people do not, but we shall use an *e*. Well, Eva?**

Eva **(who has just come from another town): They wouldn't let us write like that. We had to make our letters lean over.**

Miss A.: **I know, Eva. I know, but we must go on to our comma lesson now. Emma may write: "We ate apples, pears, and oranges." (*Emma writes, leaving out the comma before "and."*)**

Miss A.: **John, what is wrong?**

John: **I don't know. (*Two or three hands indicate a partial willingness to guess.*)**

Miss A.: What's wrong, Henry?

Henry: There ought to be a comma before *and*. (*Whispered debate. Murmurs of* "No, no.")

George: But they told us just the other way last year. How are we going to know which we should do?

Miss A.: I know, child. It is very hard, but—

(*Bell rings for dismissal. Children file out. Curtain.*)

A large part of the time of the elementary school is taken up with imparting arbitrary, or symbolic, knowledge. The same is true, though not to nearly so great a degree, of the first two years of the secondary school. These nine or ten years of school life should concern themselves largely, on the intellectual side, with the mastery of those letters, symbols, figures, signs, words, and rules, that constitute the instruments of expression of thought, and the keys to the understanding of the thoughts of others. This body of subject-matter we should expect to find fairly definite and stable. Yet if we were to follow the course of a child from the first to the tenth grade in almost any of even our city systems, we should find him obliged, in nearly every grade after the first, to modify or abandon habits that had been carefully drilled into him in previous grades. This is particularly true of penmanship, spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

It will not be the purpose of this paper to go into the matter of penmanship, further than to deplore frequent change. It is rather the purpose to set forth a few specific instances where there is definite disagreement of practice, notwithstanding the fact that these cases would seem to be capable of uniform treatment.

First, as to spelling. One must be very chary in dealing with

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this subject, but one cannot ignore it in this connection. There are some points upon which we may all agree. First, the spelling that our fathers mastered (if we may believe them) was indefensible from the standpoint of either phonetics or logic. Its analogies and classifications held good only long enough to lead the student astray. Just when he got used to *made*, *fade*, and *wade*, he came to *weighed* and *bade*. The only way to master an orthography like that was by sheer force of memory. Reasoning might help for a time, but only provided one knew when to stop being sensible. Second, nearly all school men recognize that a change is bound to come, the main question being as to the best means of accomplishing the change. Third, the pupils of the schools must be spared the confusion just as much as possible. Two ways of spelling a word are harder to remember than one. If *though* is hard, *though* and *tho* are doubly hard; and so with *enough* and *enuf*, and all that troublesome tribe. Better stick to one form, though that may be the hard one, where our children are involved, until we are ready to present a fairly consistent and comprehensive campaign.

It is very much to be feared that the confusion that is almost bound to accompany piecemeal revision will discourage those who believe in the ultimate wisdom of the movement. It is to be doubted whether anything adequate, authoritative, and permanent will be accomplished until there shall be presented to the country a comprehensive and logical treatment of the whole field of English orthography, with wide and full recommendations as to the spelling of all sound groups that are at all important. Then if teachers and publishers can agree upon that, we shall have reform.

It may be objected that such a plan is impossible. So was it objected that publishers of grammar texts would never listen to a plan for uniform nomenclature, yet they have shown a most admirable spirit of co-operation. It is not at all impossible that a wide and comprehensive reform in our spelling would be more acceptable to the country as a whole than has the partial reform we now have.

What has been said is not meant at all as an adverse criticism upon the Simplified Spelling Board, or upon any other bodies that

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have worked for reform of spelling. A period of confusion would have been inevitable no matter how the movement might have been conducted. The point is: we should recognize that the present situation is not to be thought of as permanent. We must get to a place where there is one right way to spell each of these common words.

Second, as to grammatical terminology. Little need be said upon this point here. Those wishing to see what has been done on this subject should secure reprints of Professor W. G. Hale's admirable paper published in the *School Review* for June, 1911, together with discussions by Professor Fred N. Scott and several others, including the present writer.[1]

It should be said here, for the benefit of those who have not been following this movement, that twenty-five different English grammar texts in current use have eighteen different names for one construction. Worse still, names that are emphasized as being the only right ones are criticized in others as being indefensible. Further, there is a very deceptive shifting and overlapping of names for related constructions. An elementary teacher of grammar is far more likely to be hindered than to be helped by a study of any unfamiliar text. To remedy this situation, the National Education Association has appointed a committee to co-operate with committees from the Modern Language Association and the American Philological Association, to go over the whole field of grammatical nomenclature and report a comprehensive and adequate system of nomenclature for all languages commonly studied in our schools.[2]

There is a point between the fields of grammar and spelling that may properly be discussed here. It is the spelling of singular possessives of words ending in *s*. Shall it be *James's* or *James'*? Most texts, nearly all magazines, and nearly all books add the apostrophe and *s*. The *Saturday Evening Post*, nearly all newspapers, and some texts omit the second *s*. Frequently different

[1] These reprints may be obtained by addressing Professor W. G. Hale, University of Chicago, or C. R. Rounds, West Division High School, Milwaukee, Wis. They contain a full bibliography to January 1, 1912.

[2] Professor Hale is chairman of this joint committee, and C. R. Rounds is secretary. Either will welcome communications on this subject.

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teachers in the same building follow different plans. Some make a difference between words of one syllable and those of two or more. Some make a difference between the vocalized and the unvocalized *s*. Still others say nothing about it.

As a matter of pronunciation, should it not be *James's?* Do we not sound the second *s?* But most teachers would welcome a ruling, whichever way it went, so that they might have something definite to go by. They would, however, want that ruling to be authoritative, so that they might have the assurance that subsequent teachers would reinforce, and not uproot, their teaching.

As to punctuation, really but a phase of grammar, to point out one or two specific cases, how shall we punctuate a series? Shall it be "apples, pears, and oranges"? Or shall we omit the comma before the conjunction? Texts are fairly evenly divided. Newspaper practice is all in favor of omitting the comma before the conjunction. Is not logic, however, on the side of the comma? The use of the comma here is not merely to indicate the omission of a conjunction, but to indicate parallel construction. There frequently come times when its omission leads to ambiguity.

Then, what about the introductory adverbial element? "When we inhale, our diaphragm flattens" would be punctuated by most newspapers in such a way as to put us in dire peril of inhaling our diaphragms. We teachers are not even agreed among ourselves, in our practice; but even if we were, the papers that the students read would undo our work.

Just one more. How shall we handle this: "He did not do the work. It was too hard for him." Some very excellent writers and teachers of English are simply putting a comma between those two statements. Newspapers almost never do this, and it seems to the present writer as though there is no defense for the practice. The two statements, when the conjunction is omitted, constitute two sentences. The least punctuation permissible, it seems to him, is the semicolon. But the point is, there ought to be some *right way*.

The problems indicated above merely show what a field there is for a unification of our practice in very definite and concrete lines. Do they not suggest an opportunity for invaluable service by our National Council of English Teachers? That body would be in a

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position, after competent investigation, to speak with an authority that has long been a dire need. Backed by action of the National Education Association, recommendations of the Council would be heeded.

In conclusion, we are inclined to forget how large a proportion of a pupil's time is taken up with learning arbitrary things. He is dealing with symbols of things, with names, punctuation marks, signs, and the like; and with rules for these symbols. We are inclined, too, to forget how real and vital these things are to him, if he is being well taught.

He reaches mastery here only by hours and days and weeks of the most painstaking drill. He notes details. He delights in them. In this phase of his life, a mastery of these details, which are to be the instruments for expressing his own thoughts, and his keys for the interpretation of the thoughts of others, is, on the intellectual side, the most important business of his education.

When we disturb him in the conceptions that have been drilled into the very bone and fiber of his being, we are trifling with the rights of childhood, and weakening the whole process of education.

For it is the right of the child to be taught this arbitrary, symbolic knowledge, once for all. It is the right of the teacher to know that her work upon her pupils will be accepted at par by the next teacher. It is the right of both students and teachers to experience that thrill of joy that comes to all teachers and learners when they find their previous study and teaching corroborated in subsequent work.

It is hard to estimate the waste that comes with the process of unlearning, but these items may be accepted as inevitable:

1. The shock of changing a deeply rooted conception leaves the student in a precarious and doubtful possession of both conceptions. It is utterly unsound to contend, as so many seem to do by implication, that you make it easier for a student when you give him a new name for a thing, or a new way of spelling a word. So far from it, you make it doubly hard, for he now has twice as much to remember. When, as in our grammar terminology, these names have ramifying connections with other conceptions, you make it practically impossible for him to keep the matter straight in his mind.

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2. Disturbing a student in the possession of what he has worked hard to gain discourages him. He comes to lose faith in the virtue of mastery and the potency of study. If so many things have to be turned topsy-turvy in his mind, he thinks, is any of the work he has done, or that his teachers now urge him to do, worth while? He comes to take a skeptical view of the whole process of schooling, with its shifting, undependable rules. His faith in his teachers is weakened. His enthusiasm and ardor are dampened. The greater his care in the past, the more poignant will be these feelings.

3. The teacher finds her work overturned. The careful teacher, who is honest and exacting in her requirements, feels this with particular keenness. Thus a discount is virtually put upon drill—the very life and breath of elementary-school work—and a premium is put upon carelessness.

So let us hope that we may be given a reasonable set of things to teach. Then let us teach those things and allow them to stay taught.

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AN EXPERIMENT IN LIBRARY TRAINING IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

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When a new subject is announced as a part of the high-school curriculum, the natural question is: What were the conditions which made it seem desirable? In this particular instance it grew out of the needs of the hour in the Englewood (Chicago) High School. In the reconstruction of the building for this high school a few years ago, provisions for a general library were made. Reorganizing the library and preparing cards for a new catalogue proved so great a task in addition to classes, that student help was asked for. Eventually the young people who offered their services were organized into a volunteer class to whom instruction was given after school one day each week. In two semesters a total of 38 pupils enrolled, some of whom could find time for their assignments only after school hours.

It was felt that their faithful service deserved recognition. An outline based on what it was believed could be done and its educational value was prepared by the librarian and presented to the committee then at work on the revision of the curriculum by Principal Armstrong, its chairman. The new course in effect January, 1911, offered the subject among the optional studies of the Junior and Senior years. At the beginning of the semester immediately following, 31 young people registered for the subject. Each pupil has a regular assignment in the library itself, and does his share of the actual work in that department under the direct supervision of the librarian. The full course calls for five periods a week during the Junior and Senior years. In February, 1912, 54 pupils enrolled for the course, of whom 30 were in the beginning class.

A second question, quite as important as the first, is: Of what educational value is the subject? Is it cultural or vocational or both? As reasons for offering the course the following statements

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were made: It brings the pupil in close contact with the best in the world's literature and thought, hence it has cultural value; it is a vocational subject, hence it affords vocational training; and, if he desires to continue his studies, the young person may use his knowledge and skill to earn his way through college; or, as there is a demand for helpers in private, school, and public libraries, he may enter upon such work. Finally, there is need of training in social service in accordance with the larger idea of citizenship; here is practical work in civic usefulness in making the small library of the utmost possible value to its community, and, by no means least in importance, training in meeting people whom one is to serve.

In reviewing the year just closed it is fair to ask, To what extent have these statements been verified? The extracts from papers written by the pupils themselves which are given below will be sufficient on the first point and illuminating, at least, on the others. These quotations are copied without changing the phraseology.

In testing the value of a vocational subject several things must be considered. These may be summarized substantially as follows: Does it afford practice in concrete processes, that is, actual work? Does it give technical information, knowledge of processes? Does it give general vocational information? Has it value as training for social service? For the first of these, there must be the cultivation of ideas to guide in the solution of problems; for the second, one must learn to make knowledge function and he must acquire skill; for the third, there must be the wider outlook into the history and the literature of the subject; for the fourth, there must be instilled the well-known fact that working for others makes the hardest and most effective workers, developing social as well as individual instincts. In general it may be said that these questions can be answered in the affirmative for library economics; that here is at least one study which affords, as far as one study can, a solution of a present-day problem, how to teach a subject essential to the welfare of a community through practical application in the community life.

There *is* practice in concrete processes. New books and new

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magazines are constantly received. To the pupils beginning the subject is given the task of opening properly the new books, cutting the leaves, stamping in the proper places with the regular library stamps, placing the number on the inside of the cover and on the back of the book; all this can be done by them as soon as they have had general directions and a little practice in making figures and letters. This latter is not so difficult, as they have had similar training in their drawing and science classes. The more advanced pupils find the classification, author, and copy numbers from the catalogue and shelf list—if the library already possesses a copy of the book—accession the book, and add it to the shelf list. When new titles are received, the classification and author numbers, together with the proper forms for cards, made on slips kept for the purpose, are submitted for the approval of the teacher before the actual work is done on the book itself. The present plan is to assign each of the periodicals received to individual pupils, who are responsible for getting these ready for use.

Meanwhile the recitations furnish opportunity to acquire the necessary technical information on such topics as the functions of the parts of the book, methods of classification, the "Dewey decimal system," the "Cutter author-table," the arrangement of the books on the shelves, etc.

Our books circulate, and not infrequently two or three people are required to meet the demands at the exchange desk. This affords service for each pupil at least one period a week. It is his duty to assist the teacher in charge in finding the books wanted, in charging and discharging those that circulate, and in replacing those returned. As far as possible "service in the library," as this work is called, is assigned to the inexperienced pupils when the librarian can be on duty.

It is readily seen that such service as this requires that early in the course each shall make himself familiar with the location of the books on the shelves and the use of the card catalogue. His knowledge must function in his intercourse with his fellows. He soon learns that there are real, practical problems and that he must solve them. All that he has learned in the library class as well as in other classes must be called into action. And, as one pupil put

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it, he must pay the closest attention in class not only to that part of the lesson in which the text studied is discussed, but also to the oral instructions given, that he may know how to meet the emergencies that are constantly arising, and to the reports and analyses of books. Books are now his tools and, as he cannot read them all, he must learn from what others have to say.

Nor do the details to be mastered end here. Each must watch the books as they come into his hands over the exchange desk or otherwise to see that they are in good condition; the books must be mended; the "overdue" lists made out; the reference books kept in order and in repair.

In September, 1911, the young people took entire charge of the library during those periods that the teacher-librarian was busy in the classroom. With October the assignment of library duties to teachers was made; the pupils then became assistants to the teachers in charge, with the understanding that the actual work, unless too heavy, devolved entirely upon the pupil, the teachers signing the notes necessary and answering such questions as the former could not. In this work efficiency is estimated largely by the rapidity and accuracy with which books can be found and replaced and by the general care of the reference and stackrooms.

The course has also included the reading of books in many of the "divisions" of the Dewey classification, as far as possible each pupil reporting orally on a different book. All of the class were held responsible for such general information as could be obtained in this way about the books.

On what might be called the mechanical side of the course, approximately seven hundred books have been prepared for the shelves since school opened in September. Fully four thousand books and pamphlets have been listed in the accession book. (Although the library in its present location has been in use for four years, no attempt was made to "accession" the books until last spring.) One thousand cards have been typewritten for the catalogue; the slips for as many more have been prepared; many books have been mended and thus kept in circulation.

The practical value of such work from the standpoint of the library is self-evident, but what has the individual gained by it all?

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He has first of all added to his knowledge of books by "browsing" among them. He has learned, second, greater control of the hand in printing and in the use of the "library hand," and in the mechanical processes required in mending; third, economy in the use of materials and time; fourth, neatness, promptness, accuracy, attention to details; fifth, the value of interdependence in social service; as one pupil expresses it, "If one person neglects his work or does it carelessly, the work of another pupil is more difficult"—thus knowing the social value of his task he is kept from dishonest work; sixth, the pleasure there is in helping others less fortunate than himself to find the thing wanted. One pupil says that he has gained a "valuable knowledge of the hard and unyielding nature of realities." He has learned the value of "system" and that to be "efficient and effective he must take responsibility." In a word, he has learned to work.

To some has been disclosed their vocational ideal. Two of these, members of the original volunteer classes, are in college today fitting themselves for librarianship. One of these must earn his living and has been accepted for service in one of the college libraries. Another, a young woman who is fitting herself for science teaching, has had supervision of one of the laboratory libraries during her years in college. Three other members of the volunteer classes entered the training class of the Public Library and now hold library positions. Two members of the regular class, recently graduated, have positions under the "sixty-day civil-service rule."

Visitors have commented favorably on the work done in our library. One librarian, who sat in the reference room part of a recitation period, remarked, "It is run just like a public library so far as the circulation of books and the use of the reference room is concerned, and the pupils are well trained." Another, who visited the stackroom after the close of school, commented on the lettering on the backs of the books: "No one could do better than that." The less showy work is done in the same careful manner.

In reply to a question as to the service rendered by a certain pupil, a teacher said, "Efficient, yes; that is just the word; in every respect she is efficient; nothing escapes her eye." My own

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comment is that the work is well done—not that there are no mistakes, that no work has to be done over again, but that the *ésprit de corps* is admirable; the young people work with rare patience and persistence until the results desired are obtained.

The syllabus recommended by the committee of the Chicago High and Normal School Association which was appointed to consider a course of study in this subject, was submitted to a librarian of many years' experience in a large public library. He commended it as providing an excellent vocational course. The committee believe that the results obtained, where a fair trial is given, will bear out the statements made in asking that the subject find a place in the curriculum, and that even if librarianship as a vocation is not desired, there will be more intelligent and appreciative use of books and libraries.

In the practical working-out of the course, it has been said that it might be difficult to assign enough work to make it worth a full credit. The experience of both teacher and pupil in our case proves that the difficulty lies in the opposite direction—not to assign *too much.* Pupils have been asked to report accurately the time spent on the tasks assigned. In their papers they speak freely of this. One girl says: "Although it has taken a great deal more of my time [than other studies] and there is more work to do, I find it the most pleasant work."

The topic assigned was "What Library Economics Has Meant to Me." The utmost frankness was urged, that changes in plans and methods of assignments might be made if this seemed desirable. After the usual classroom discussion of the papers, the pupils expressed themselves as willing that the material be used at the discretion of the teacher.

The first extract was written by a boy:

> When I first took Library Economics . . . . I thought we would hand out books and paste and patch as I used to do in kindergarten. I soon discovered . . . . that librarians were not paid for amusing themselves. . . . . When I look back, after having almost completed the semester, I feel as if I had accomplished something. Since taking the subject I have never wasted an hour in the Study Hall and have been busy many noon hours, for there was always work in the Library. Before taking the subject I never fully realized the importance of system, but when, with thirty or forty people clamoring for

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books, I lost precious minutes looking for a misplaced book instead of walking right to the book, knowing just where it should be, I realized that not many big firms could do without system and that the one with the best wins. . . . . When I first took the subject I could hardly read my own handwriting; now a second person may read it easily, with the exception of my German script. . . . . I have realized the number of problems confronting the librarian daily, the need of tact, of patience, of ability, and perseverance on the librarian's part, and shall always respect the library and librarians more, for having taken Library Economics.

A number have the last point in some form. One says:

I had never realized before how much responsibility there was to the library. I soon found out that one had to have lots of patience to charge and discharge books. It has taught me how to deal with all kinds of people who come in to get books.

Of "the practice work" this young woman says:

I think that it is splendid practice work to be able to go into the library and work out problems for yourself. . . . . Although I am not thinking of taking up library work when I get out of school, I think that this practical work has done me much good. It has made the work more interesting to know that you are getting some practical good out of Library Economics instead of learning a lot of rules and things that you feel will never be of any great use to you.

Of the value of the book reports, she adds:

By hearing the reports of others, interest is often aroused and we will read the book not because we *have* to but for pleasure. In this way we get to read the best books and come to enjoy them more.

She writes at some length of the value of the study of reference books and books on libraries and concludes by saying:

In all these ways I feel that Library Economics has helped me more than any other subject.

No comment is needed on the following letters:

"I have learned, not to my surprise, as the saying is, but with joy, that what is contained in Webster's dictionaries and the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* is not the entire essence of human knowledge; the door of a more spacious reference room has been opened to me."

"I never knew before that the dictionary was of any value except for looking up the meaning of words."

"The work that I have done has made me like to read more solid books, for being among books so much I naturally look over more of them than I otherwise would."

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"We have a large library at home and I never thought to look at the books unless I wanted to look up some reference for my school work. Now I like to take the books, examine the kinds of binding, and, often when I read them, I notice what kinds of cards I would make for them."

"Library Economics has helped me to read the book that is sometimes called dry and uninteresting yet valuable. I think the reason I was able to read such a book was because I was looking for certain facts and qualities in the book that I needed for a book report."

"I have always liked books, but Library Economics has opened my eyes to the fact that they have far greater value than the average person ever dreams of. . . . . The course has taught me how to meet people, and to know the 'majesty of calmness at critical moments.' It has created in me a new spirit and a better way of doing things. The old slipshod methods are gone. . . . . Diplomacy has been taught; the value of a 'level head' has been indelibly impressed upon my mind; the value of little things . . . . the minutest details must be considered. . . . . It has shown me how easily work can be done and how interesting it is to get results. Another great impression it has made on me is that time flies quickly and we should make the most of it. It has taught me never to shirk a hard task, but to take as much interest, or even greater interest in it, than in the easier duty. . . . . The necessity of doing at once, and doing thoroughly, the task given has also been impressed on me."

"One year's training . . . . has given me a knowledge of books that I would never have known were in existence; in fact, it has aroused in me a liking for what some people call 'dry books,' as my knowledge of books has taught me how to go about reading a book in a way to discover the interesting things. . . . . Knowing these things has helped me to tell other poor souls that have come into the library how to obtain the information that they have looked for in vain and to help the younger boys and girls select suitable reading."

"Before entering the classes I could not imagine myself standing before unknown people and in a way giving orders, but this is the nice part of having joined the class—it has made me do many things that I never thought that I could do. I have been able to deal with many difficult conditions that have arisen in the library, which has taught me how to deal with different temperaments. . . . . How easily in the library class you fall into the habit of doing things because you see that they have to be done and because you love to do them without being told—of leaving things just the way they ought to be after mending books or having had a heavy day in giving out books. One soon discovers that things worth doing are worth doing well."

"Responsibility was put upon me—something that I never had had before—and when I was able to take charge of the library alone, I found I was trying to help everyone to learn how to use the library, and in finding information for others, I was learning *some few things* for myself."

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"It has shown me how very important it is to be exact and careful. . . . . If one small mistake is made it requires a great deal of work to make it right; often the wrong and careless work cannot be undone. In the mending of books you learn the importance of these two things. . . . . So much has to be done that you forget yourself in doing for others."

Another young woman says:

"The one semester . . . . has meant more to me than any one of the four years of my high-school life. . . . . The recitations have been very helpful. We have not only studied books but very practical things have been discussed. Thus the subject has done much to prepare one for life after leaving school, whether he enters business or not. . . . . It is plainly seen that everyone who has taken the subject up in high school is filled with it ['library spirit'] by the interest taken in all the departments of the work. . . . . It has given me a broader and more sympathetic feeling for people as a whole and a strong desire to be of use and help to others."

"It has made me ambitious to take up the work after leaving school," says another. "Not caring to be a teacher I could think of no work which would keep up my education until I hit on library work. This I consider the most important of all the advantages of Library Economics."[1]

The mending of the old books does more than train the individual in neatness and carefulness:

Another phase of the work that I liked was the mending of the damaged and worn-out books. It was entertaining as well as instructive and it seemed like doing a favor to mend an old book; for the very fact that the book was worn showed use, and use meant usefulness, and usefulness is one of the things most to be desired in a library. For unless a library is useful it has failed in its mission. Another lesson learned was the proper handling of books, for the mishandling of a book meant the shortening of a book-life just that much.

As with many another subject sometimes lessons not in the textbook are taught. This youth found the truth of this:

"First of all, Library Economics did the obvious thing: it taught me something about libraries, their management, their uses, their trials, and their tribulations. Then it gave me a bit of information about the immense systems, the Library Association and various organizations, of which I had not the slightest knowledge; and the tremendous difficulty of keeping a library and making it useful that was the incentive for their formation. But most important, it taught me a lesson that one would least expect in a library course—*how* to work, *when* to work, to *systematize* my work, to *do* my work."

[1] It is interesting to know that similar statements have been made by college students to Librarian Henry, of the University of Washington, and these have led to more attention being given to the subject in their course.

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This young woman has found, among other things, her vocational ideal:

"Library economy has helped me in my general education more than any other subject that I have taken in high school. . . . . It has taught me that things need to be done accurately and properly the *first* time, or I am making a great deal of extra work for other people. . . . . I have been taught to respect public property. When I use a library book that looks as if it had been through several civil wars, and I have to spend time erasing marks that others have carelessly put in, the only good feeling that I have for that individual is that he has given me some work to do before I can earn my credit slip. . . . . [But with all] it has imbued me with the library spirit and I intend to educate myself for a librarian."[1]

The influence of the library and the library class upon the school itself is the topic of a paragraph in the paper of a young woman who was a member of the first volunteer class and has been in the library more or less of her time for three years:

Nothing shows better the value of the library and the library class than the fact that most, or in any case, half of the people who use the library now are Freshmen and Sophomores, while only three years back most of the Freshmen did not know that such a place existed. . . . . No one knows what has been done in the library who has not watched its growth in the last two or three years. It is one of the most valuable parts of the school but . . . . many things are needed to keep it up besides books.

The subject appeals to the "motor minded":

Library Economics not only trains the fingers but the mind; it teaches one to be accurate in his work, exact, precise, and neat in all things that he does.

And last of all its appeal to the person not intending to take up library work is put in another way:

It has taught me the value of accuracy, promptness, tact, and, perhaps the most valuable of all, it has given me a wider knowledge of character and people, and what they demand of those who are in public service. It has given me a better knowledge of books and their relations and importance to

[1] The following tabulation is from the papers of 32 pupils: 14 speak of the value to them of the training in punctuality; 18, in accuracy; 15, in carefulness; 3, in concentration of thought upon their work; 4, in economy in the use of materials; 5, in initiative, adapting materials to ends, and discovering methods of handling materials; 3 speak of their increased respect for public property; 14 speak of their increased sense of responsibility; 9, of their knowledge of people and sympathy with them; 8, of the value of system.

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all classes of people, and last, and by no means least in importance, it has taught me economy and neatness in the use of materials of all kinds. These things are of value to everyone at all times, and those courses of study in which they would be the most evident requirements are the most useful to students after they have reached the third year of high school.

Here, then, is a vocational subject which follows the trend of native interest, the actual world of activities about the young person. Here are activities, manual and intellectual, that can be performed—that are essential for the conduct of the school. The subject is taught along with its application. It is motivated. These young people desire to know more about books and libraries—some that they may become library workers, others that they may know better how to use books.

The thing that cultivates personality is the exercise of personality; the feelings and the will must be exercised; voluntary personal activity must be aroused. The shaping of personal activity by experience is education. Thus, while assisting in managing one great department of the school for the common good, the community interest, the pupils are developing their own physical, moral, and intellectual activities.

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EDITORIAL

THE DICTIONARY SQUABBLE

The squabble of rival dictionary-makers over the question of key alphabets is one of those Donnybrook affairs from which the innocent bystander will discreetly retire while the fight is young. Otherwise he may find himself, in the terse language of Christy Mahon, "split to the knob of his gullet." Vituperation and acrid personalities, charges of conspiracy and countercharges of subornation, have now reached a point where the actual comparative merit of the two systems is in danger of being altogether forgotten. The blunt truth in the case is that from the scientific point of view both alphabets are bad, while from the practical point of view nobody knows, or can know for many years to come, which is the worse. In view of this fact, it is most unfortunate that reputable scholars have, by the turn of events, been made to appear as strenuous defenders of that which, strictly speaking, admits of no defense. We would recommend to every phonetician who wishes to preserve his self-respect the remark of one who, taking sides in a similar brawl, had reason to regret it: "A plague o' both your houses."

CONCERNING CRANKS

The flood of educational investigation and experiment—of graphs and monographs—is not only impending, it has arrived; and soon its current may be sweeping the traditions of all schools —college, secondary, and primary—from their anchorage. With it is likewise impending, so it is said, the educational crank and hobby rider, so called usually because he wants to find out, or has found out, or thinks he has found out, something new, and persists in advertising the fact to the great discomfort of them that seek repose. Sometimes the discovery is unimportant, for much experiment must be fruitless and much investigation valueless, except negatively, to put warning notices up on misleading roads;

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but even thus negatively the work of the crank may be worth all that it costs.

Again and conversely, the crank may at any moment prove to be the power that moves the entire machine, as he should be. Not all wisdom is with the old, not all foolishness with the new. A crank may be well aware that even he cannot measure the immeasurable or "unscrew the inscrutable" and yet not be thereby discouraged from ascertaining by continued tests of many teachers and pupils the relative efficiency of two methods of teaching spelling, or even the number of hours necessary for the average teacher to read a hundred thousand words of average high-school themes. Then, finding that he has made a positive contribution to knowledge, he may feel encouraged to proceed to other and more important contributions, and eventually by virtue of his successes reach the serene conclusion that after all it is the crank that makes the world go round.

In this connection it may be observed that systematic investigation and experiment to determine scientifically some of the thousands of educational problems that may be so determined, without any chasing of moonbeams or any meddling with psychics as such, is now under way everywhere, by national and state organizations and committees, by individual schools, and by individual teachers; but that in proportion to what lies ahead the work is hardly begun. Some problems may be studied by individuals acting almost alone or by single small groups; others require the co-operation of many individuals or many groups. The *Journal* undertakes not only to make public the results obtained, but to find business for all willing workers that offer themselves. If you have already found out something, or if you would like to help find out something, or if there is something that you wish to find out, if you wish to help or to be helped, let the *Journal* know. Work and workers, jointly or severally, are both welcome.

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THE ROUND TABLE

To the Editor of the "English Journal":

I wonder if you have seen the fable of Bidpai which has come to light still more recently than the one published in your February issue? To me it is even more interesting than that.

Very truly yours,

ROBERT H. FLETCHER

GRINNELL, IOWA,
February 20, 1912

ANOTHER FABLE OF BIDPAI—THE SONG-BIRDS AND THE DOMESTIC FOWLS

There was once an old gentleman who had an extensive estate on which he kept numbers of birds of various kinds. He devoted a good deal of attention to the education of the young birds—had them trained by bird-tutors several hours each morning. While they were still chicks they used to meet all together in a bird school, and the tutors taught them what sorts of food were good for birds, where to look for food, and many other things of a useful nature. The tutors also tried to teach them a second sort of subjects: how to build nests in the trees or the fields, how to fly gracefully, and how to sing. The classes in nutrition and the like got on pretty well (though of course there were plenty of dull chicks of all species); but while the meadow-larks and the other song-birds generally learned the above-ground subjects (so to call them) successfully, the domestic fowls never made any progress in them. When the birds were older, some of them—and these were mostly the song-birds—passed on to other tutors, from whom they continued to learn, or to try to learn, the nesting, flying, singing, and the like. There was not always perfect peace and happiness on the estate, and the domestic fowls had an uneasy feeling that part of their education had been thrown away; but, for the most part, when the birds grew up they went their several ways, and one could always see the hens and the geese contentedly occupying the yard and hear the song-birds as they flew and twittered overhead.

After a while the old gentleman died and his grandchildren inherited his estate. They took to entertaining a great deal and needed many fowls for the purpose; so they largely increased the number of the

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domestic contingent. Before long the chickens of these species, seeing themselves so much more numerous in school than the song-birds, decided to stand for their majority rights. They therefore sent a deputation to their owners and made complaint. "Our curriculum," they said, "ought to be made over. None of us can ever learn to sing, and as for being graceful, we don't want to be. What good are such things anyway? Besides, they don't interest us. Those young song-birds have got altogether false ideas about the real values of life. Some of your grandfather's friends used to come around and make poems about them, and they took them seriously. Better clip their wings and set them to being useful with us."

The owners thought the matter over a minute or two and then replied: "You are evidently right. Our grandfather was a ridiculous old fogey. Of course neither you nor anyone else ought to study anything but what is practical and what interests you. Then, too, there is the greatest danger that hard application to anything involving mental effort will irreparably injure your brains." So the owners brought in new tutors who gave the young birds much more minute instruction about how to dig for worms and taught them how to get fatter for the table and how to develop their feathers so that they would be more useful for cushions. They substituted these things for the old nesting-flying-singing subjects, for which they left only a very few minutes at the end of the morning. "If any of the young birds want more of these things," they said, "they can study them later under other teachers."

At all this the song-birds remonstrated. "You have turned the tables too completely," they said. "We thought any normal bird knew by instinct how to peck; it's of no value to us to learn how to get fat; and it's too late for us to begin to learn to fly and sing when we are almost grown up."

The owners, ... (Here the manuscript breaks off).

THE LABOR OF THEME-READING

Professor E. M. Hopkins' investigation of the conditions of teaching English composition has brought out, among other things, testimony to the effect that theme-reading is among the most nerve-exhausting and brain-exhausting of occupations, one that it is impossible to pursue as long or as steadily as other occupations, without seriously harmful results. Perhaps no one who has had experience will doubt this, and I may add that the personal experience of occasional returns to this kind of work after a considerable intermission has given me an oppor-

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tunity to test it thoroughly. Scarcely any other intellectual labor appears to be quite comparable with it in the severity of its tax upon nervous vitality. Nevertheless, there are probably doubters, without experience, who will wish to be "shown," and as everyone feels more fully convinced of a truth when he has discovered the reason for it, it is pertinent in this case to inquire into the reasons. Being neither a psychologist nor a nerve specialist, I am not competent to do this, but I may be permitted to offer several considerations.

For one thing, theme-reading is not intrinsically interesting work. For a while, it is; and a teacher of exceptional resources in drawing from his pupils themes of vital personal or intellectual qualities may keep alive his own interest and prolong the period of it. But the time comes when he has advanced so far beyond the mental and emotional range of his pupils, and when the subject-matter and manner of the ordinary theme have grown so familiar to him from innumerable repetitions, that his interest necessarily palls. The result is inevitable. "The labor we delight in," says Macbeth, "physics pain." But when the delight is no longer present to play the physician, when the labor ceases to be a "joyful trouble" to us, we are face to face with the condition described above. No doubt this is in some measure true of all elementary teaching. But in the case of the languages, mathematics, and the sciences, the elementary work is mostly carried on in the classroom or laboratory, where personal contact, personal response, and mutual stimulus relieve or entirely remove the tedium. There is little sense of effort to keep at the work, no driving oneself to the steady performance of an uncongenial task; nor is the teacher obliged to pursue the elementary work in outside hours. The theme-reader, on the contrary, unable to get away from his labor, has few or no breathing-spells for recuperation; and while he is employed, he is performing double service—that of worker and taskmaster too.

In the second place, his work has in itself a twofold character. He must correct technical errors of all kinds, from chirography to rhetoric, and he must attempt to follow closely the thought of the writer (which is often a good deal like trying to track a flea) in order to help him to the highest effectiveness in clear and logical presentation. The fatiguing effect of the constant clash between these two duties cannot be exaggerated. Try to read an essay by John Stuart Mill and at the same time give rational answers to a child who interrupts you in the middle of every sentence with some childish question, and you will appreciate the situation. A proofreader's work is extremely trying, yet he generally

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has but one of these duties to perform. Manifestly, theme-reading is one of the things in which division of labor is desirable, and strong as are the arguments against separating spelling, grammar, and word-study from actual composition, there is perhaps nothing that would bring such immediate relief to the theme-reader as this separation. I am by no means prepared to recommend such a way out of the difficulty, but I have desired to set forth as clearly as possible several aspects of the difficulty that exists.

ALPHONSO GERALD NEWCOMER

STANFORD UNIVERSITY

A NEW TYPE OF INTERSCHOLASTIC CONTEST

Readers of the *English Journal* may be interested in an account of a novel interscholastic contest in reading, talking, and letter-writing held under the auspices of Lake Forest College last year in connection with an interscholastic athletic meeting. In recent years school authorities have been seeking ways of stimulating among their young people what may be called the rhetorical impulse, the impulse of expression, a wise training of which is an important part of preparation for life. To this end they have given generous encouragement to various forms of interschool competition, particularly to debates and contests in oratory and declamation. The results of such contests have not been generally encouraging. High-school students are too young for the severe training necessary for formal public debates. Oratorical contests, for high-school students, are altogether unnatural affairs. Declamation contests have tended to become merely elocutionary displays, neither useful nor interesting.

Last year the Lake Forest faculty, in co-operation with a number of high-school teachers, devised a new kind of contest, a triple competition in oral discussion, oral reading, and letter-writing, which would fit in with the actual work of the schools, recognize solid qualities in the students, and furnish a really valuable and interesting competition. In working out the plan the effort was made to exclude all merely ornamental features and to make the contests really practical. Medals were offered to the contestants ranking first and second in each event, and a silver cup to the school which should make the best general showing.

For the contest in oral discussion, a list of forty-five topics, based upon the various high-school studies, was prepared—topics which could be discussed acceptably in five-minute speeches. These were given to the contestants at 11:30 in the morning, and at 1:30 the preliminary

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contest began, position being decided by lot. Each speaker had thus two hours or so to think over the topic which he had chosen, but was not permitted to consult books nor to talk with his instructors. The topics of the list covered all branches of the school curriculum, together with a few dealing with current events, and the subjects chosen by the thirty-four speakers in the preliminary competition ranged over the entire list. Some of the topics given were:

The Boy Scouts.
Just What Illinois Advocates of Deep Waterways Want.
The Character of Goldsmith.
The Jew as Portrayed in *The Merchant of Venice* and in *Ivanhoe*.
An Outline of a French or German Story Read in the High-School Course.
The Olympian Games of Greece.
The Latin Ablative Absolute.
The Value of the First Ten Amendments to the Federal Constitution as Safeguards.
Causes of the Civil War.
The Earth's Astronomical Relations.
How the Wireless Telegraph Works.
Advantages to Be Derived from the Study of Chemistry.
Bacteria in Relation to Human Food.

The best ten speakers were chosen to repeat their speeches in the final contest, at night, before a different set of judges. In both preliminary and final the judges paid chief attention to accuracy and clearness of statement and orderliness of arrangement, and those who heard the thirty-four boys and girls were surprised and pleased at their intelligent and interesting work. The speeches varied in fluency, and in keenness of insight, but all were fresh and simple in form and honest in subject—all normal products of high-school pupils. I am inclined to think that the scheme of last May has some defects of detail. The time of preparation should be equalized more fully and perhaps shortened for all of the speakers. The winners of the preliminary, I think, should be required to take new topics for the final, from a second list of topics. But after making allowance for such defects, the contest was a great success. To those of the audience who have suffered through many an interscholastic contest, the revelation of what high-school pupils can do when they are not delivering "canned" speeches, in the preparation of which all spontaneity has been drilled out, was a delightful surprise. In this contest, by the way, the boys did better than the girls, although the one girl who qualified for the final took a high place.

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The reading contest was virtually a test in reading at sight. Each of the contestants in the preliminary was given a short passage from a standard novel (Thackeray, Dickens, George Eliot, or Stevenson), not included in the high-school course, and after ten minutes or so was called in to read it to the examiners. It was a pretty severe test of the student's ability to catch and express the spirit of an unfamiliar passage. The results were very satisfactory. Nearly all the young people read distinctly and correctly, and many of them with expressiveness. In the final the five who had been chosen from the preliminary were given other selections, this time from short stories of recent date, and were marked by a different set of judges. In the reading the girls did better than the boys.

For the letter-writing contest a letter of application for admission to college was asked. It was to be written without assistance, in the student's handwriting, according to the actual conditions of the writer's own case, and addressed to the authorities of any college or university. The letters were judged as to appropriateness of matter, business-like quality, correctness of form, and good taste. This was the least successful of the contests. Some of the letters were good in both matter and form, but the average was low. In view of the fact that in most schools, of late, more attention has been paid to written composition than to oral work, the relatively poor showing in the letter-writing has a certain significance.

A good many years' experience of various sorts of intercollegiate and interscholastic contests has bred in me considerable doubt of their value, as usually conducted. At the same time, I am convinced that competition is a good thing for young people, in rhetorical work, as in athletics, if the conditions can be made normal and wholesome. By basing the competition upon the studies actually pursued in the high-school curriculum it seems to me that right conditions can be secured. The contestants are thus tested upon their proficiency in their regular work, and the contest becomes—what it should be—merely an incident in the work of the year. The rhetorical impulse is stimulated in the right way. In the oral discussion, for instance, the student tries to tell effectively something which he knows and which is worth telling; he does not try merely to "show off." The best feature of the Lake Forest contests last May, according to the high-school teachers who were present, was that they minimized mere display and emphasized accuracy and clearness of thought and tactfulness of arrangement. They were really tests of power, and also of the assimilation of school training. To read well

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at sight, to make a good five-minute talk under the conditions prescribed, implies that a boy or girl has been doing intelligent and faithful work in the classroom, has developed the habit of study as well as the knack of rising to an occasion.

The methods of these contests, by the way, show an interesting and quite unexpected similarity to the examinations in English which are required of all entering students at the Chicago Teachers College, and to some features of the entrance examinations recently urged upon the eastern colleges by the New York Association of Teachers of English.

I am inclined to think that interscholastic contests of this general sort, if wisely managed, might have a very beneficial reaction upon the regular class work of the schools participating. At present, beyond question, the rhetorical impulse is sadly neglected in the daily work of the schools, alike in composition, in literature, and in other studies. Even when the teacher sees the need, it is rare that the pupils can be made to see the opportunity. Pupils are apt to study their lessons passively, day after day, and sometimes never realize, throughout their school course, that there is a place for structure and style in an ordinary classroom recitation. For them to find out that proficiency in talking, reading, and letter-writing under conditions which are very nearly those of the classroom, is thought worthy of public exhibition, and of publicly awarded prizes, may help the boys and girls to realize the rhetorical possibilities of their regular class work.

The experiment is likely to be given further development this year. Lake Forest will try it again in May, and some of its features have been taken up for trial on a larger scale in other high-school contests of the year. It will be interesting to watch the results.

JOHN M. CLAPP

LAKE FOREST COLLEGE

ENGLISH ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA

Five years ago, in conference with the high-school teachers of the state, the University of Nevada outlined a course of study in English, incorporating what the teachers had found by experience most fruitful of results. Very little if any emphasis was placed upon university preparation, the University taking the ground that the course best suited to develop the pupil would give the best equipment for college work. No emphasis was placed on problems of the historical development of language or literature; no attempt was made to select a half-

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dozen writings that would insure a liberal education; the sole principle that governed the inclusion of a work was the principle of merit; the work must be, it was decided, standard within its class; there was to be a wide range but no inclusion of shoddy.

For convenience the writings were thrown into five groups: poetry, drama, novels, essays and orations, and short stories. Each group was then graded through the four years of the high-school course. The capacity of the student, his interest, and, to a limited extent, the correlation with other subjects governed the grouping. Outside reading in abundance was included, increasing in range and quantity through the four years in all five groups. To the list of works thus outlined, the University added a large number selected and graded by the same principles. The teachers were advised to make the classroom work definite without making it mechanical, and to follow up the outside reading carefully without killing spontaneity.

In composition and rhetoric little was done beyond discouraging formal rhetoric and encouraging the practice of assigning themes drawn from the pupil's own experience. In the West the pupil has a much wider range of experience than the eastern pupil of the same age; attention was called to this, with excellent results.

Finally, the plan was presented to the teachers of the state as merely suggestive; teachers were encouraged to criticize it and to modify it in any way desired, the only restriction being that the works substituted be standard in quality, and that good results be achieved. The University has checked on the work by careful inspection, and by imposing on all candidates for admission an entrance examination in English. This examination has been strictly a test in power to think and to express the thought with reasonable accuracy.

So far the plan has worked well. Inexperienced teachers have been glad of something definite to follow; experienced teachers have found it sufficiently broad to admit the practice of their own theories. No millennium is professed; some students still come to the University with no fine literary appreciation, some with appalling ignorance of the fundamentals of expression, but in the main there has been a pronounced advance. At any rate, there is no quarrel over the requirements; there is a fine spirit of loyal co-operation between the high schools and the University.

HERBERT WYNFORD HILL

UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA

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NEWS AND NOTES

NEW YORK CITY HIGH-SCHOOL TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

The mid-winter meeting of the English teachers of New York City was held in the directors' room of Wanamaker's store on February 17. Over one hundred were present. Mr. Theodore C. Mitchill reported on the organization of the National Council of Teachers of English, and both he and Mr. Benjamin A. Heydrick urged the teachers to subscribe to the new *English Journal*. The committee on Departmental Pedagogy, Dr. H. K. Monroe, chairman, presented a very valuable report on what the schools are doing in oral composition. The Committee on Uniform Grammatical Terminology presented a report which was unanimously adopted (see below). President Edwin Fairley announced that Mr. Gilbert S. Blakely, chairman of the New York committee, had been made chairman of the New York State committee, which is to include representatives of modern and classical languages.

The addresses of the morning were on oral composition. They were given by Professor Azuba Latham of Teachers College, and by Professor Charles Sears Baldwin of Columbia University. Sixty members lunched together after the meeting.

Our association is congratulating itself that one of its members, Mr. Theodore C. Mitchill, has been made a member of the Conference on Uniform Entrance Requirements in English.

Report of the Committee on Uniform Grammatical Terminology

When your committee accepted appointment to see what could be done toward securing agreement in the use of grammatical terms, they were glad to do so because they felt that this was a matter about which something ought to be done. No one of them, however, realized the extent of the problem. It is bad enough to require our students to learn a different set of terms for each language that they study, but it is grossly inexcusable to compel them to learn a new terminology whenever they change the textbook in English grammar or are promoted to a new teacher. When your committee examined the different books in use, they were astonished at the extent to which these books differed from one another in the matter of common terms. It is no wonder that students become confused and that teachers find great difficulty in agreeing in grammatical discussions when the tools in use mean one thing to one person and another to another.

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The ideal remedy for these difficulties would seem to be to secure an agreement among the teachers of the various languages taught in our schools to use the same terms in all languages. This would be an extremely difficult, if not entirely impossible, task and one that your committee felt it would be somewhat presumptuous for it to undertake. Something, however, should be done without further delay. The committee therefore proceeded to examine a considerable number of grammars now in use and to note the terms employed with a view to recommending the adoption, first, of those terms that are in use in a decided majority of grammars and, second, where there is no agreement in usage, those that seem most in accord with logical thought, the usage of other languages, and the comprehension of students.

The books examined are by the following authors:

Baskerville and Sewell	Maxwell
Buehler	Reed and Kellogg
Carpenter	Scott and Buck
Frank	Southworth and Goddard
Kittredge and Arnold	Sweet
Krapp	Whitney
Longmans (revised by George J. Smith)	Wood

After a careful examination of the books mentioned and a comparison of their various terminology, your committee recommends that the Association of English Teachers request the City Superintendent, the Associate and District Superintendents, and the Board of Examiners that they hereafter use the following terms in all syllabuses and examinations issued by them, in preference to other terms used for the same ideas:

1. *Nominative*, *possessive*, and *objective* cases.

2. *Nominative absolute* instead of "noun used with a participle," "absolute nominative," etc.

3. *Independent by direct address* instead of "vocative," "nominative of address," "independent," etc.

4. *Independent by exclamation* instead of "nominative of exclamation," "nominative independent," etc.

5. *Direct object* instead of "object of a verb," "object complement," etc.

6. *Indirect object* instead of "dative object," "object of a preposition understood," etc.

7. *Objective complement* instead of "factitive object," "predicate objective," etc.

8. *Subjective complement* instead of "attribute," "attribute complement," "predicate nominative and predicate adjective," etc.

9. *Noun used adverbially* instead of "adverbial objective," "noun to express time, space, measure," etc.

10. *Retained object* instead of "object of passive verb." (He was given the *position* of secretary.)

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11. *Object of a preposition* instead of "principal word in a prepositional phrase," "object with a preposition," etc.

12. *Noun in apposition* instead of "appositive."

13. *Auxiliary verbs* instead of "helping verbs."

14. *Copulative verbs* instead of "the copula," "verbs of incomplete predication," etc., terms applied to the verb *is* and other verbs that take a subjective complement.

15. *Irregular* and *regular* verbs instead of "strong" and "weak" verbs, etc.

16. *Progressive forms of the verb* instead of "continuing verbs" for such forms as *am going*, *has been running*, etc.

17. *Gerund* instead of "infinitive in ing," "participle noun," "verbal noun," etc.

18. *Past participle* for gone, ridden, seen, etc., instead of "passive participle."

19. *Mood* instead of "mode."

20. *Present perfect* and *past perfect* instead of "perfect" and "pluperfect."

21. *Past tense* instead of "preterite."

22. *Conjunctive* instead of "relative" adverb.

The committee further recommends that the association request the educational authorities of the city,

1. That they adopt the following classifications, even though they may not be complete, as sufficient for instruction in the city schools:

a) Nouns: common, proper, collective.

b) Pronouns: personal, relative, interrogative, demonstrative.

c) Adjectives: interrogative, relative, demonstrative, articles.

d) Moods: indicative, subjunctive, imperative.

e) Conjunctions: co-ordinate, subordinate, correlative.

2. That when, in an examination, the syntax of a word is called for, the word *syntax* shall be understood to mean the grammatical relation of the word to the rest of the sentence.

With one exception, the committee has recommended the term used by a majority or plurality of the authors whose books it examined. The exception is *subjective complement*, used by only three out of the fourteen. In this case the usage is about equally divided between *attribute complement* and *predicate noun* or *adjective*, but for neither is there a majority. The committee recommends subjective complement because it corresponds exactly to objective complement, because it can be easily understood, and because it seems much more logical than either of the others.

PRESTON C. FARRAR
CHARLES R. GASTON
GILBERT S. BLAKELY, *Chairman*

MORRIS HIGH SCHOOL
New York, N.Y.

Adopted February 17, 1912

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ORGANIZATION OF THE NEW JERSEY ASSOCIATION

The first annual meeting of the New Jersey Association of Teachers of English was held at Newark on February 24, with about sixty-five teachers present. At least one hundred had expressed willingness to join such an organization, and as time goes on many more than this are expected to unite.

After the adoption of a constitution and election of officers for the ensuing year, Mr. Wilson Farrand, head master of the Newark Academy, gave a report of the National Conference on Uniform Entrance Requirements in English held that week in New York City. He reviewed the history of the Conference, and outlined in a general way the possible changes to be made—extensions of the list, separation of composition and literature requirements, etc. The dominant note of his talk was that progress and better understanding of the needs of all pervaded.

He was followed by Mr. Theodore Mitchill, principal of the Jamaica High School, New York City, a delegate to the Conference. Mr. Mitchill presented in a forcible way the growing demands of the high schools on this Conference, emphasized their need of fighting for what was their due, and declared that all the "progress" was due to this insistent and rightful claim. He is an able exponent of the "free list," the dominance of high-school representation on the Uniform Entrance Requirements Board, and the right of the high schools to assume that their education of youth for efficiency is the right and adequate training for higher education, rather than the demand of the college for a mere knowledge of books.

Mr. Edwin Fairley, president of the New York City Association of Teachers of English, spoke of the work done in his association, and offered this newly organized body some excellent suggestions. Mr. A. B. Meredith, commissioner of secondary education in this state, then addressed the assembly on the work he proposes to do in the immediate future to secure better teaching conditions for English teachers. He deplored the large numbers in classes, the small pay, and the many irregularities existing in different schools, and, in so far as he can, will try to remedy them.

Miss Sarah J. McNary, head of the English Department of the State Normal School at Trenton, then read an interesting paper, which presented the observations of her school on the preparation given high-school graduates admitted to the normal. The tone was decidedly optimistic—a refutation of the argument that high-school graduates are not being adequately prepared for work in the state normals.

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However, she pointed out many ways in which this preparation can be improved. A letter of regret from Superintendent Kendall, state commissioner of education, on his inability to be present was then read. Mr. Kendall strongly favors this organization, and wishes it the highest good possible. Mr. Hosic and Mr. Thomas, delegates to the National Conference, had hoped to be present, but were unavoidably detained.

The hour was late when the addresses were concluded, leaving no time for a planned discussion of the College-Entrance Requirements and recording of the wishes of the teachers in this state. But it was ascertained from sentiments expressed then and previously, that the majority of the teachers of the state welcome greater liberty in these requirements and any legislation which will give freer play to the vital things in high-school education. No time was left to urge the claims of the *English Journal* and the National Council. This will be done at the May meeting. Already many have signified their desire to subscribe and join. All in all, the meeting was most successful—an omen of the place New Jersey wants to take in the English teaching of the country.

The officers elected for the ensuing year were: *President*, J. Milnor Dorey, Trenton; *Vice-President*, W. Patterson Atkinson, Jersey City; *Executive Committee*, Elizabeth H. Bliss, East Orange; Sarah J. McNary, Trenton State Normal; George S. Steinmetz, Patterson; David Magie, Newark Academy.

J. Milnor Dorey

Trenton, N.J.

THE SPRING MEETING OF THE NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

The New England Association of Teachers of English held its spring meeting on Saturday, March 16, in Jacob Sleeper Hall, Boston University. The following officers were elected: *President*, Professor William Allan Neilson, Harvard University; *Vice-President*, Oscar C. Gallagher, Boston High School of Commerce; *Secretary-Treasurer*, F. W. C. Hersey, Instructor in English, Harvard University; *Editor*, Charles Swain Thomas, Newton High School; *Executive Committee* (with the above), Miss Elizabeth Richardson, Girls' High School, Boston; Miss Kate Stanley, Technical High School, Springfield, Mass.; Alfred M. Hitchcock, Public High School, Hartford, Conn.; W. D. Parkinson, Superintendent of Schools, Waltham, Mass.

The Association accepted with regret the resignation of Mr. Samuel Thurber, Jr., of the Newton Technical High School, who for four years

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has been an officer of the Association. The Association extended its cordial appreciation of the service which Mr. Thurber has so efficiently rendered.

Mr. Arthur W. Leonard of Phillips Academy, Andover, presented a Report on the National Conference on Uniform Entrance Requirements in English, held in New York, February 22–23. Mr. Leonard explained the changes that this Conference has proposed. He particularly emphasized the general lines of division—radical and conservative—which pleasantly marked the proceedings of the Conference.

As one phase of this report aroused some discussion, a vote was taken on the two types of examination which Harvard College has recently been setting. The "old plan," it is well known, assumes a knowledge of the specific books now on the college-requirement list. The "new plan" assumes merely that the applicant has pursued the study of English in a carefully planned English course through a period of four years. The questions are consequently more general but no less difficult. By decided vote, only six of the four hundred dissenting, the Association recorded its preference for the "new plan" type.

Professor C. N. Greenough of Harvard University gave a report from the standing committee of the Association on college-entrance requirements. As chairman of the committee, he had tabulated reports which had come from the schools and which recorded the pupils' preference of the books read in the English course. In most respects the census proved that the preferences expressed by the Harvard Freshmen were similar to those expressed by the high-school classes. The preferences of the Harvard Freshmen had been reported upon in the December *Leaflet* of our Association.

As Professor Greenough had told us that in his own opinion his conclusions were based upon insufficient data, the Association continued the committee, and promised at the same time to co-operate with Professor Greenough in securing adequate facts for a more comprehensive report. The rest of the program consisted of short talks on the teaching of selected masterpieces. The teachers told in a practical way how they taught certain selections.

Mr. Charles L. Hanson of the Mechanic Arts High School, Boston, discussed Carlyle's *Essay on Burns*. Miss Mary Haskell spoke on Wordsworth's *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*. Miss Martha Bennett of Dana Hall School, Wellesley, discussed Milton's *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*. Miss Alice H. Spaulding of the Brookline High School spoke on Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*. Mr. Samuel Thurber, Jr., of the

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Newton Technical High School, outlined the method he uses in teaching Franklin's *Autobiography*.

The continued and increasing interest in our Association is shown by the large and growing attendance at each succeeding meeting. The Association now has nearly five hundred members and is constantly growing. It has as associate members a very large number of persons outside of New England. While most of these associate members cannot attend our semi-annual meetings, they keep in touch with the Association through the *English Leaflet* which is published monthly. Anyone who is interested in the cause of English and who wishes to join our Association for the purpose of receiving the *English Leaflet* may send the annual dues of one dollar to Mr. Frank W. C. Hersey, 17 Laurence Hall, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass. He will be glad to supply, free of charge, a printed list of titles of over ninety *Leaflets* which the Association has published during the eleven years of its existence. The editor of the Association will gladly receive communications from any teacher in the country who has a contribution to offer on English work. He will welcome a paper on any device that has succeeded, or the discussion of any general principles that need further emphasis. In short, any question which pertains to the pedagogy of English is a suitable subject for a *Leaflet*.

CHARLES SWAIN THOMAS, *Editor*

NEWTON, MASS.

THE KANSAS ASSOCIATION OF ENGLISH TEACHERS

A provisional organization of the English teachers of Kansas was formed at the University of Kansas on March 16, at the annual conference of high schools and academies. A special business meeting was called for the purpose, including representatives of colleges and grade schools as well as of secondary schools. All the business done is subject to ratification by the English Round Table of the Kansas State Teachers Association, which meets at Topeka, November 7, 1912. Hitherto this Round Table has been the only organization of English teachers in the state, and the object of the action of March 16 is to give this organization form and permanence, without changing its relation to the general Association, and to make it possible to undertake definite and systematic work for a considerable period, within the state, and in co-operation with similar organizations in other states and with the National Council.

A constitution modeled after that of the State Association of Indiana was adopted, and the following temporary officers were named to serve

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till November 7: *President ex officio*, as chairman of the English Round Table, Professor E. M. Hopkins, of the University of Kansas; *Vice-President*, Superintendent L. A. Lowther, of Emporia; *Secretary-Treasurer ex officio*, Miss Charlotte M. Leavitt, of Washburn College, Topeka; *Editor*, Professor J. W. Searson, Kansas State Agricultural College; member of executive committee, Principal Jessie Mustard, of Mankato. Two research committees of the Round Table were made ex-officio committees of the new association; chairman of the High-School Committee, Miss Lela F. Douthart, of Kansas City, Kan.; chairman of the Elementary-School Committee, Superintendent John H. Bender, of Arkansas City. The Executive Committee of the Association was authorized to propose by-laws and modifications of the constitution at the November meeting.

On invitation of the National Council, the Association voted to affiliate with the Council, and to make the *English Journal* its official organ. At the request of the Council, the high-school committee, chairman Miss Douthart, was named to co-operate with other state committees in making inquiry of high-school graduates as to the efficiency of their training in English. Other problems for investigation were then suggested and discussed, such as standards of grading, comparative tests of oral and written composition, of class and individual teaching, of co-operation of other teachers with English composition teachers, of the possibility and efficiency of departmental teaching in grade schools.

The program and speakers for the November meeting were then discussed; and the Executive Committee was authorized to perfect the program and engage speakers by correspondence with all the schools of the state, to submit the plan of organization for amendment or approval to school supervisors and English teachers, and to canvass for memberships and for subscribers to the *English Journal* as a medium of publication for the proceedings, the results of investigation, and the best papers of the Association.

ENGLISH TEACHERS OF THE UPPER OHIO VALLEY

The English Section of the Association of Secondary Schools of the Upper Ohio Valley effected a permanent organization on March 16 and took steps to affiliate with the National Council. The chairman was Mr. C. J. Geer, of Shadyside Academy, Pittsburgh. The program included a report on "The Conditions Surrounding the Teaching of English Composition" and a paper on "Oral Composition" by Miss Mary Mitchell of the Winchester School, Pittsburgh. The officers elect

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are: *President*, Ernest C. Noyes, Pittsburgh Normal High School; *Vice-President*, Miss Shigley, East Liverpool, Ohio, High School; *Secretary-Treasurer*, Orton Lowe, Wilkinsburg, Pa.; *Executive Committee*, the officers and Messrs. Geer of Shadyside Academy, and Bitner of McKeesport High School.

The National Council of Teachers of English grows apace. Besides over five hundred individual members, the Council now includes eleven local associations, with a grand total of about three thousand members. These are: The New England Association of Teachers of English, The New York State Association, The New York City Association, The Indiana Association, The Michigan State Association, The English Section of the Schoolmaster's Club of Michigan, The Illinois Association, The Louisville Association, The Kansas Association, The Wisconsin Association, and The Upper Ohio Valley Association. Besides these, the following societies have definite plans for co-operating and will probably soon unite with the Council: New Jersey, Missouri, Texas, Iowa, West Virginia, North Dakota. The *English Journal* will publish the programs of the meetings of these societies and is already the official organ of some of them. By means of it any association may keep in close touch with all the others. The magazine seems likely to become a very useful medium for the exchange of opinion and experience. Let us make it so.

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REVIEWS

THE TUDOR DRAMA

When a new book is produced upon a phase of literary history which has been repeatedly and exhaustively treated, it should have the merit of either new and illuminating material or strikingly new method of presentation. The volume upon the Tudor Drama[1] recently issued is in its way voluminously interesting, but it seems to fall short of being a work for the expert scholar, and to be not admirably adapted to the general student. According to its preface, it is "a work which aspires to the notice of the undergraduate student and the general reader." In arrangement of material, however, and particularly in its style it seems to have been written *at* the leading scholars rather than *for* the developing student. For students' use the content of the book is most serviceable where it is most concrete, and where it is least obscured with discussion of critical cruces. The bibliographical pages which follow each chapter are very well devised and in a measure the best single feature of the work.

PERCY H. BOYNTON

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

THE CHILDREN'S EDUCATIONAL THEATRE

Not many books outside of fiction of a certain stamp find an audience ready to hand as Miss Herts's little book does[2]—a book to be considered, by the way, as the author frankly indicates in her preface, not at all as a specimen of literary art but wholly as a carrier of facts. During the past few years interest in things dramatic and discontent with present school methods, in the mind of the thinking public, have been jostled into awareness of each other, so to speak, with the result that all our schools—one might almost say all agencies professing to do with the education of young people—are filled with dramatic intention. Everywhere in high and even in elementary schools dramatic clubs are organizing and those already established taking on new activity; courses

[1] *The Tudor Drama.* A History of English National Drama to the Retirement of Shakespeare. By C. F. TUCKER BROOKE. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1911.

[2] *The Children's Educational Theatre* BY ALICE MINNIE HERTS. New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1911.

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of study are including in their reading lists other plays besides the classic four or five of Shakespeare and *She Stoops to Conquer;* alumnae associations—here one must cling to the feminine—are turning to the production of plays as a means of keeping themselves alive; the Drama League of America is gathering huge numbers of teachers into its membership and has at least two departments looking especially to the interests of young people of school age; and in the city of Chicago there has, this year, been formally started by a group of people, many of whom are teachers, a movement looking toward the establishment of a young people's theater. But all such responses are young; they are often vigorous, but they are also vague; everyone is doing something, but few know exactly what. Happily, everyone wants to know.

To many of these watchers on the hilltops, Miss Herts's experience among the children of recently immigrated Russian and Polish Jews in East New York will not be entirely new. From time to time during the last five or six years, articles have appeared in various magazines giving more or less fragmentary accounts of her work. The book now appearing, however, small as it is—one hundred and fifty pages in large type, and close to one-half of this given over to excerpts from public statements of well-known lecturers and writers as to the value of dramatic work—will be of practical assistance to teachers in ways untouched, so far as I know, in print before. It gives a fairly consecutive account of the whole adventure, which, from 1903 to 1909 under the auspices of the Educational Alliance and finally as an independently incorporated organization, achieved such success as made its subsequent suspension from lack of means of support something like a tragedy. But its best value is in the things it tells us by the way.

One of the most suggestive facts in connection with the Educational Theater is the quality of the plays on which it throve. The author tells us that when she took charge of the entertainment department of the Alliance she found that the most popular programs were concerts and amateur dramatic performances mostly of the cheapest sort, though there were some good plays among them. The elders gave their entertainments in their native tongue, the young people "in what in their vigor and enthusiasm they believed to be the English language." Wise woman that she was, she remained an inconspicuous observer for several months; then she stepped forward, combined and organized the various groups of players and musicians, and decided upon the *Tempest* as a trial piece! Her reasons are worth noting: "The play was chosen because its scenes are laid in Nature's own abode, significant contrast to

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the tall, forbidding tenements of the neighborhood; because it teaches the lesson of the majesty and simplicity of nature, and the nobility of forgiveness." The other plays mentioned as performed to enthusiastic audiences were *The Little Princess*, a dramatization of Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett's *Sara Crewe*, *The Forest Ring*, by William de Mille, *Ingomar*, *As You Like It*, *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, *Snow-White*, a dramatized version of a German folk tale, *The Prince and the Pauper*, by Mark Twain. Smile who will at this assemblage, the step forward was Brobdignagian; but nobody, child or adult, seems to have had any difficulty with it. In a word, they would take anything they could get, but they preferred a thing that had sense and vigor and beauty.

Still more impressive is the patience and enthusiasm with which hard-worked young men and women and undisciplined, not to say "tough," boys submitted themselves to the discipline enforced during the weeks or months during which a play was preparing. Her account of a presentation night is inspiring: the hour of the play was 8:15, the players and all assistants were on hand at 6:45, and if anyone were absent fifteen minutes before the curtain was to rise, the understudy was entitled to play the part. Further penalty there was none; but during five seasons of regular Sunday matinees from October to June there were not half a dozen people who allowed their seconds to play. On the freedom of the audience, also, there were no checks except those imposed by themselves and by the interest of the performance. After the first two or three occasions there was no trouble.

Miss Herts's method of developing a production may be gathered from what is said of one or another occasion. Her first step was to engage an assistant with some experience both of "stage work" and of teaching, who organized classes in which the plays to be produced were studied. A play was chosen and a printed announcement made that applications would be received from persons wishing to take part. When these applications had been made—in the case of the *Tempest* production this meant about three hundred and fifty young people—a meeting was called to which all who had responded were invited, and the play was read. Then followed other general meetings, in which the plot of the play was discussed, the meaning of each character, the period at which the action is supposed to take place, each person present apparently receiving a typewritten copy of the part for which he or she had made application. Later these typewritten copies were made, when need arose, by volunteers from the army of candidates for places in the cast, or their friends. After the meetings came rehearsals, the

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forming of several full casts, the assignment of the duties of property-handling, stage-shifting, prompting, and so on. As the enterprise took on permanency, the several casts played in succession, the members taking their turns also at the humbler duties behind the scenes; and this democratic procedure was adhered to, we are assured, on even the most special occasions—the cast whose regular "turn" it was played. In one production of the *Tempest*, one hundred and thirty young people were directly engaged; in the total number of productions of the same play during the season, over three hundred.

The value of all these things hardly needs comment. The author tries to get at what she is after in various phrases; she gave scope, she says, to "the dramatic instinct common to all young people," she "trained the creative, not the imitative faculty." Call it what one will, one can hardly read the book without feeling that this experiment has come near a solution of the problem how to bring the material of experience to children that they themselves may take it and turn it into joy and goodness and understanding. The children in this educational theater "created their parts" in a sense wider than is commonly carried by this phrase.

In the execution of this conception, there are points, of course, that invite questions. What amount of effort, for instance, is worth expending on "historic accuracy" as to dress and scenery? One fancies that the author deceives herself a bit as to the real character of her own work in this line; that what she really did was no more than arousing among the young people a lively sense of the situation they were to represent. And this would seem to be the important thing. Of course this is not saying that anything which incites the children to read and investigate for themselves is not admirable; in other situations than that described in this book, much more of the some sort of thing will occur to the alert teacher as possible. But language is deceptive, as we know, and the will-o-the-wisp of historic accuracy is likely to lead the unwary into a parlous chase. About interesting questions which arise when children are assisted to make plays of their own from familiar stories, nothing is said, and evidently nothing of this sort was undertaken.

It would have been interesting if the author had discussed more fully the effect upon the community of the successful carrying on of this devoted work through so many years. She speaks of the improvement in manners, speech, and personal habits among certain of the young people and especially of the change in standards of dress among the young women who played in *Fauntleroy*. The little glimpse we get

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into the house in which had arrived the proud moment of setting up a "front parlor," is reassuring; instead of the cheap plush and gilt fashionable among the neighborhood, as close a reproduction as possible of the simple furniture selected by the director of the theater for the home of Fauntleroy's mother, was chosen. There is mention of parents' meetings, with programs and discussions, and some words on the interest shown by children and young folk classed in the community as vicious. About these things we should willingly know more. On the other hand, there is solace for the reader in the author's lack of effort to make out a case more perfect than the actual one.

The final chapter is chiefly devoted to an argument that children's theaters should be supported by private endowment rather than be attached to the public-school system, though they should be in close co-operation with the schools. The reasons given for this preference will be puzzling to most teachers of the Middle West: they are, first, that classes in educational theaters should always be coeducational, and, secondly, that membership in these classes should be not compulsory but elective. These will probably not be felt by most teachers the most baffling obstacles in the way of incorporating children's theaters into the town and city systems of schools; but it is fortunately not necessary to enter into this question—apparently at our doors, however—or even to agree as to the importance of "play-acting" in school, in order to appreciate the book as a contribution toward the solution of the larger question—in the words of a recent article in the *Atlantic*—of how to "dramatize education."

ELVIRA D. CABELL

CHICAGO TEACHERS COLLEGE

BOOK NOTICES

[Mention under this head does not preclude review elsewhere.]

Essentials of Poetry. By WILLIAM ALLAN NEILSON. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1912. Pp. 282.

The Lowell Lectures for 1911. An original and very suggestive treatment by a thoroughly equipped scholar. In the course of the discussion, Professor Neilson clears up a good many critical difficulties, such as that of distinguishing sentimentalism, for example. Those who wish to get a fresh impression of poetry unbiased by biographical and other extraneous considerations may well read this volume.

English for Secondary Schools. By W. F. WEBSTER. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. Pp. 352. 90 cents.

A vastly more practical book than the older book by the same author. The gain is apparent especially in the matter of exercises adapted to secure efficiency in the forms of expression in common use.

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Stories and Story-Telling. By ANGELA M. KEYES. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1911. Pp. 286.

A rather full outline of theory is followed by the author's versions of a number of stories suitable for telling. Many teachers will welcome the book because of the brevity of the stories. A number occupy less than a page.

Tennyson's "Idylls of the King." By CHARLES W. FRENCH. New York: Macmillan, 1912.

A new volume in the Pocket Classics series by a well-known editor of high-school readings. The introduction and notes are exceptionally praiseworthy. The Idylls included are: "The Coming of Arthur," "Gareth and Lynette," "The Marriage of Geraint," "Geraint and Enid," "Lancelot and Elaine," "The Holy Grail," "The Last Tournament," "Guinevere," and "The Passing of Arthur." Thus does the editor administer fitting rebuke to the framers of the College-Entrance Requirements.

Studies in Reading, a Fourth Reader and a Fifth Reader. By J. W. SEARSON and GEORGE E. MARTIN. Lincoln (Neb.): The University Publishing Co., 1911.

The aim of the authors is to provide a number of short classics suitable for training in "reading with appreciation." Each selection is prefaced with a few remarks intended to suggest the point of view and followed by interpretative questions and a list of selections with similar theme.

Select Poems of Robert Browning. By ANDREW J. GEORGE. Boston: Little, Brown & Co.

The Poems of Ida Ahlborn Weeks. Published by her friends. Newton, Iowa, 1910. $1.25.

The Poems of Leroy Titus Weeks. Published by the author, Newton, Iowa, 1911. $1.25.

Famous Privateersmen and Adventurers of the Sea. By CHARLES H. L. JOHNSTON. Boston: L. C. Page & Co., 1911. Pp. ix+398. Illustrated.

A popular account of Raleigh, Drake, John Paul Jones, and several others by an admirer of Henty.

Jose: Our Little Portuguese Cousin. By EDITH A. SAWYER. Boston: L. C. Page & Co., 1911. Pp. 92. Illustrated.

This volume and the following add two more to the long list of "cousins" of different nationalities. A good deal can be learned from these books without much effort on the part of the children.

Barbara: Our Little Bohemian Cousin. By CLARA VOSTROVSKY WINLOW. Boston: L. C. Page & Co., 1911. Pp. 95. Illustrated.

A Soldier of Valley Forge. By ROBERT NEILSON STEPHENS and C. E. THEODORE ROBERTS. Boston: L. C. Page & Co., 1911. Pp. 328. Illustrated.

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THE ENGLISH JOURNAL

VOLUME I MAY 1912 NUMBER 5

HIGH-SCHOOL STUDENTS' RANKINGS OF ENGLISH CLASSICS[1]

CHARLES MAXWELL McCONN
University of Illinois

Perhaps you will allow me to recall the purpose and plan of this study to your minds by quoting a few paragraphs from my paper of a year ago, in which I presented the idea in the fewest words into which I was able to condense it.

REVIEW OF THE PLAN

The aim in compiling the list of College-Entrance Requirements has been, obviously, to present a liberal, representative selection of English classics of moderate length, and this aim has been excellently realized. Such a selection is, moreover, a thoroughly logical one. Whether it is pedagogical, however, is surely open to question. It takes full and careful account of the subject-matter to be presented, but it takes no account whatever of the high-school student to whom the presentation must be made. The question is not even raised as to which classics, or what kind of classics, the high-school boys and girls like, or can get hold of, or themselves feel to be worth while.

Our problem then, it seems to me, is clear. The thing that we have to do first is to collect data of an objective character in regard to the tastes of our students. From such data we can hope to deduce criteria that will enable us to select a list that shall take account of our students, as well as of the resources of our literature.

The plan I propose for collecting such data is as follows: That the teachers of this Association shall take ten minutes in each of their English sections on some day near the close of the present semester [this was the first semester of 1910–11], and ten minutes again in each section on a day near the close of the second semester of this year; that they shall write on the blackboard a list of the classics studied during the semester about to close; and shall ask the stu-

[1] A report presented to the Illinois Association of Teachers of English at Urbana, November 24, 1911.

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dents to copy the titles in the order of their preference—putting first in their lists the book which they themselves liked best and felt that they got the most out of, and so on. The students should be asked to sign their names to the lists, principally in order to indicate the sex, and to put down their age and high-school class. If we could get fifty teachers, each having on an average fifty students in English, to take this matter up, we should get 2,500 rankings of the books in the present list by the high-school students themselves, with the sex, age, and grade indicated on each ranking.

The rankings will be tabulated to show how many times each one of the books in the list was ranked first, how many times second, third, and so on.

If we should find any book or group of books ranked low in a large percentage of the lists, that would seem to indicate that this book or group is open to serious question. We should have a basis, on the other hand, for including more books of the general type represented by general favorites. In other words we may hope to have at last something like definite data on which to base a revision of the College-Entrance Requirements.

COLLECTING THE DATA

The plan was carried out exactly as proposed above. About the middle of December, 1910, letters were sent out to the teachers who had handed in their names at the meeting, and to a few others whose names were received later in various ways, reminding them of the rankings to be taken for the first semester and suggesting the method which it seemed best to follow. Again about the middle of last April similar letters were sent out, and by the first of July practically all the data were in.

The response to these letters was exceedingly generous. Roughly speaking, there were sent in rankings of books read, in either the first semester or the second semester of 1910–11, by about 8,000 high-school boys and girls of this state and adjoining states.

IRREGULAR AND DOUBTFUL LISTS DISCARDED

The first step, unfortunately, in handling these data had to be the throwing out of a rather large number of rankings.

To begin with, there were, of course, a number of teachers who thought of better ways of taking the rankings and who took them in accordance with these improved methods. The different new plans proposed were undoubtedly in almost every case really better than the one the Association had adopted, except in the one point of being more complicated. Almost the sole merit of the plan

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adopted was its extreme simplicity; but this one merit made this plan practicable—obtained the co-operation of the teachers of over two hundred high-school classes when, I venture to say, not one-fourth of that number could have spared the time and energy that would have been required for co-operation in a more elaborate scheme. But the principal point—aside from any question of the relative merits of the new plans suggested and the plan which the Association had undertaken—is that the results sent in, where improved methods of taking the rankings had been used, were, of course, *different* in form and content from the other lists received, and could not, therefore, be used with the rest.

The first set of lists that had to be discarded consisted, then, of those which had been taken in some irregular way. It seemed wise to throw out, also, the lists in which only two books appeared—where only two books had been read during the semester. With the field of choice narrowed to this minimum, it seems clear that the expression of preference might too easily and too frequently fail to be significant.

One other set of lists was discarded—those in which more than six books appeared. This was on account of the difficulty of ranking eight, ten, or a dozen books with any precision. If you will call to mind, let us say, ten English classics, and attempt on the spur of the moment to rank them in the order of your preference, you will find that it is no small feat. It seems unwise, therefore, to attach importance to such long lists when made by high-school students in ten or fifteen minutes at the beginning or end of a class hour.

With all these subtractions, there were left the rankings of 5,803 students, representing 209 high-school classes, and including 21,684 "reactions."[1]

TABULATION BY CLASSES

The rankings that remained were tabulated by classes; that is to say, we obtained for each class the list of books read with the

[1] The word "reaction" is used here and throughout the remainder of this paper to mean the ranking of a single book by a single student. For example, a student who ranks a list of four books furnishes four reactions, and a class of twenty students, each of them ranking four books, furnishes eighty reactions.

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number of students who ranked each book first, second, third, etc. For example, picking out one of the class tabulation sheets at random—it happens to belong to the 123d class that was tabulated—a class of 32 Freshmen, 13 boys and 19 girls—we have the following:

CLASS NO. 123

Books Read	No. of Times Ranked			
	1st	2d	3d	4th
Ivanhoe	18	6	5	3
Merchant of Venice	8	9	10	5
Vision of Sir Launfal	2	12	10	8
Ancient Mariner	4	5	7	16

A brief inspection of this table will show that the preference of this particular class is indicated by the order in which the names of the books are printed. *Ivanhoe* is easily the first choice, and *The Merchant of Venice* is a clear, though hardly a strong, second. *The Vision of Sir Launfal* has fewer firsts than *The Ancient Mariner*, but has so many more seconds and thirds that, for the class as a whole, it ranks above the latter—which you will note is placed last by half of the students.

Evidently, however, it is desirable to reduce such a tabulation to a single column of figures, and this was done for the class given above in the following manner: Each book was credited *one* for every student who ranked it last; credited *two* for every student who ranked it next to the last, or third; credited *three* for every student who ranked it third from last, or second; and credited *four* for every student who ranked it fourth from the last, or first. On the basis of the foregoing table this gives us the following results, the sums at the right indicating the ranking:

Ivanhoe	72	+	18	+	10	+	3	=	103
Merchant of Venice	32	+	27	+	20	+	5	=	84
Vision of Sir Launfal	8	+	36	+	20	+	8	=	72
Ancient Mariner	16	+	15	+	14	+	16	=	61

The tabulations for all of the 209 classes were treated in the same way, and twenty-nine of these class rankings are given and discussed below.

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TABULATION BY BOOKS

After all, however, any single high-school class is too small and presents, accordingly, too large a "probable error," to be very significant; and, since hardly any two classes read exactly the same combination of books, comparisons between classes were impossible. A grand tabulation was therefore made of all the lists under consideration *by books*, the limits of the classes being ignored. We obtained, for each book that was represented in the lists, the total number of students who had read it; the number of those reading it who had ranked it first; the number who had ranked it last (i.e., third in a list of three, or fourth in a list of four, or fifth in a list of five, or sixth in a list of six); and the number who had ranked it *median* (i.e., second in a list of three; second or third in a list of four; second, third, or fourth in a list of five; and second, third, fourth, or fifth in a list of six).

It seemed well enough to ignore the distinctions among the several median positions. After all, whether a student was ranking three books, or four, or five, or six, the significant expressions of preference were represented, I take it, in the assignment to the first place and the assignment to the end of the list. With respect to the other books in any student's list, the fact of importance was that they had not been preferred as favorite nor yet totally damned, and this fact was equally true for all middle positions—for both the second and the third books, for example, in a list of four. On the whole, it seemed to be more accurate, from the standpoint of the essential truth of the results, to ignore the differences among the middle positions than to attempt to take account of them.

We obtained, then, in this tabulation by books, a list of all the classics represented in the 5,803 rankings, with the total number of students who had read each book and the number who had ranked each first, in the middle positions, and last.

Here again, as in the case of the rankings by classes, it was clearly desirable—almost necessary, if any definite comparisons were to be made—to obtain an expression of our results in terms of a single column of figures—preferably in percentages.

At the risk of some tediousness I must explain the method of deriving these percentages. It was assumed, to begin with, that

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if any book had been ranked first by all the students who read it, that book would have been entitled to 100 per cent. This being the case, it follows that the percentage with which any book should be credited for each first which it received may be obtained by dividing 100 per cent by the number of times the book was read. For example, a book which had been read by 100 students, and would have been given 100 per cent if all those students had ranked it first in their lists, should be credited with 1 per cent for every first it did receive—with 40 per cent if 40 out of the 100 students actually ranked it first. In the second place, it was assumed—somewhat arbitrarily, it must be admitted—that the value of a single median rank was two-thirds that of a first, and the value of a last, one-third that of a first. The book, for example, that had been read by 100 students and was entitled to 1 per cent for every first would be credited with two-thirds of 1 per cent for every median, and with one-third of 1 per cent for every last. Suppose that 40 of the 100 students reading this book ranked it first, as assumed above, that 30 put it median, and 30 last. This book would then be credited with 1 per cent for every first, or 40 per cent; also, with two-thirds of 1 per cent for each of its 30 medians, or 20 per cent; and finally, with one-third of 1 per cent for each of its 30 lasts, or 10 per cent—giving it a total rank of 70 per cent.

Or, take one real case—that of the leading book in the list, *A Tale of Two Cities*, which was read by 679 students. Dividing 100 per cent by 679, we have 0.147 per cent, the value of a single first. Two-thirds of this figure, or 0.098 per cent, is the value of a median; and one-third, or 0.049 per cent, the value of a last. Then, multiplying the value of each first, or 0.147 per cent, by the number of firsts received, or 499, we have 73.35 per cent; to which is to be added the product of the value of each median, or 0.098 per cent, by the number of medians, or 147, which is 14.40 per cent; and, also, the product of the value of each last, or 0.049 per cent, by the number of lasts, or 33, which is 1.61 per cent—giving a total rank for *A Tale of Two Cities* of 89.36 per cent.

The following table shows the ranking, on the basis of percentages obtained in this manner, of all the classics which were read

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by as many as one hundred students. One classic—*Hamlet*—which was read by three fewer than one hundred is included because of the remarkable verdict in its case.

STUDENTS' RANKINGS OF ENGLISH CLASSICS

No. of classes represented..... 209
No. of students represented..... 5,803
No. of reactions..... 21,684

	Title	Totals	First	Median	Last	Percentage
1.	*Tale of Two Cities*.....	679	499	147	33	89
2.	*Last of the Mohicans*.....	365	247	94	24	87
3.	*Ivanhoe*.....	1190	677	413	100	83
4.	*Hamlet*.....	97	50	42	5	82
5.	*Enoch Arden*.....	258	74	145	39	81
6.	*Silas Marner*.....	950	472	387	91	80
7.	*Macbeth*.....	657	307	285	65	79
8.	*Lady of the Lake*.....	752	265	386	101	77
9.	*Merchant of Venice*.....	801	304	410	87	74.5
10.	*Idylls of the King*.....	965	353	479	133	73.5
11.	*As You Like It*.....	565	190	264	111	71
12.	*Treasure Island*.....	420	141	191	88	70.5
13.	*Vicar of Wakefield*.....	109	23	76	19	70.5
14.	*House of the Seven Gables*..	329	90	180	59	69.5
15.	Poe's Tales and Poems...	330	95	154	81	68
16.	*Sketch Book*.....	568	118	359	91	67.5
17.	Burke's *Conciliation*.....	664	128	412	124	66.5
18.	*Life of Goldsmith*.....	289	53	145	91	66
19.	*Julius Caesar*.....	1003	222	522	259	65
20.	*Paradise Lost*.....	129	33	56	40	65
21.	*Minor Poems*.....	440	92	245	103	65
22.	*Sir Launfal*.....	622	153	341	128	65
23.	Burns's Poems.....	227	43	142	42	64.5
24.	*Twice Told Tales*.....	115	20	31	64	64
25.	*Sohrab and Rustum*.....	715	146	375	194	64
26.	*Bunker Hill Address*.....	259	47	129	83	62
27.	*Farewell Address*.....	212	35	123	54	62
28.	*Cranford*.....	105	12	68	25	62
29.	*Midsummer Night's Dream*.....	161	21	87	53	60
30	*De Coverley Papers*.....	736	72	347	317	59
31.	*Iliad*.....	341	62	133	146	58.5
32.	*Twelfth Night*.....	357	52	182	123	58
33.	Palgrave.....	230	39	68	123	54
34.	Chaucer.....	167	16	70	81	54
35.	Franklin's *Autobiography*.	221	22	87	112	53
36.	Macaulay's *Johnson*.....	488	39	208	241	52.5
37.	*Deserted Village*.....	195	11	86	98	52
38.	*Ancient Mariner*.....	1075	128	448	499	52
39.	*Sesame and Lilies*.....	312	36	127	149	51.5
40.	*Essay on Burns*.....	337	25	121	191	50
41.	Emerson's *Essays*.....	185	14	56	115	48

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INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS

It is to be admitted at once, at the very outset of any discussion of the foregoing table, that the results there summarized are very rough in their character. Many minor distinctions are overridden when so many varying lists are thus summarily totaled. It is not at all the same thing as if all the books in question had been read by a single group of students of one given high-school year, with known proportions as to sex and age.

On the contrary it may be urged that in so large a number—obtainable only by such a summary totaling—the distorting effect of many of these minor differences may be supposed to have disappeared by cancellation. In the almost innumerable combinations of books in the different lists every book was repeatedly compared with every other book; and each book was read under every conceivable condition with respect to year, size of class, sex and age distribution, and the like. Moreover, it seems not unlikely that the importance of some of these distinctions has been exaggerated, because—as will appear from the class rankings, twenty-nine of which are given below—there was actually very little difference in the general trend of preference between classes of Freshmen and of Seniors, or between classes in which the girls were in a majority and classes in which the boys were the more numerous. Taking class by class, we find the ranking nearly always essentially the same as in the general table given just above, in which, as noted, class limits are ignored. It would appear that the entire high-school constituency reacts, roughly speaking, in the same way in this matter.

Nevertheless, I should be the first to decry attaching importance to minor differences in the list of percentages. I should say that a difference of 5 per cent in the foregoing table ought not to be considered at all. Probably a difference of 10 per cent is unworthy of note. But I take it that as between a group of books at the very top of the list and another group at the very bottom we have a clear expression, unmistakably reflecting the thought and feeling of 6,000 of our high-school students, and that this rather solid fact is worthy of some study.

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ONE OR TWO STRIKING CONTRASTS

I will ask you to glance first at the bottom of the table. Probably your eye will be caught by our old friend, *The Ancient Mariner*—one of the three books which were read and reported on by as many as 1,000 students. Surely the record in this case is a little pathetic when we consider for how many years and with what enthusiasm we have been compelling practically all our high-school students to spend weeks on this book. A little over one-tenth of the students put it first in their lists; nearly one-half put it last—i.e., third in a list of three, or fourth in a list of four, or fifth in a list of five, or sixth in a list of six.

Compare with this one of the other books which was read by more than 1,000 students—*Ivanhoe*. The record is exactly reversed: more than one-half put it first, and fewer than one-tenth put it last.

You may notice, also, in the group at the bottom of the list—next to the end—the *Essay on Burns* (still "prescribed for study"). Of 337 students who read this classic, only 25 ranked it first, and 191—pretty close to two-thirds—put it as far down as they could get it.

Compare with this the book in the group at the top which was read by nearly the same number—*The Last of the Mohicans*. Again the entry is almost exactly reversed: two-thirds put it first; only 24 put it last.

TWO GROUPS

It seems to me that expressions as clear as these, even with respect to individual books, are important. Obviously, however, a comparison of groups, if two groups could be selected, would be still more instructive.

Let us select our groups on a mathematical basis.[1] If you will inspect the table you will find that—speaking in round numbers—each of the first ten books, through the *Idylls*, was ranked first by

[1] Attention is called to the fact that in the selection of these groups—and it is on these that the argument really turns—the column of percentage is not taken into account. The figures considered in the case of each book (total number of readers, number ranking it first, and number ranking it last) are merely totals, obtained from the original data by simple counting, having undergone no mathematical transformation.

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from one-third to one-half of all the students who read it, and ranked last by only from one-tenth to one-seventh. For the last twelve books in the list, from the *De Coverley Papers* on, the record is reversed. Speaking still in round numbers, each of these books was ranked last by from one-third to one-half of all who read it, and ranked first by only from one-tenth to one-seventh.

Perhaps the first thing we notice in these two opposed groups is the superficial diversity of the books in each. The first ten books include four novels, but include also three plays and three poems; while the group at the bottom of the list comprises epic, lyric, essay, and autobiography; and within most of these forms, in both groups, widely different schools, methods, or moods are represented.

It is clear at once, from this diversity, that some of the more careless generalizations in regard to students' preferences are not supported.

For example, the too simple conclusion that students like best what is the easiest to read hardly explains 50 firsts and only 5 lasts from 97 readers of *Hamlet;* or, on the other hand, the condemnation of the *Autobiography;* or—stepping for a moment outside our two groups—the fact that Burke's *Conciliation* ranks practically even with Poe's *Tales*, and that *Lycidas* and its companion pieces were placed slightly above the poems of Burns.

What I may call the narrative hypothesis—that of themselves high-school children care only or chiefly for narrative—would seem at first glance to receive more support; yet it fails to account for the three Shakespearean plays in the top group, or to explain the fact that six of the twelve pieces in the group at the end are narratives—including the *Iliad* and Chaucer!

Likewise, the notion that the books that have been a good while in the lists, that have come to be well edited, with which teachers have had experience, are the ones that succeed is not quite consistent with the presence of the *De Coverley Papers*, *The Ancient Mariner*, and the essays on Johnson and Burns in our little inferno at the end.

THE PRINCIPLE

Is there, then, any characteristic that is common to those ten diverse books at the top? Is there a common characteristic to be

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found in the twelve books of the other group? And are these two characteristics by any chance antipodal? If it should prove to be so, surely, in view of what these groups represent, we have our finger on an important principle.

It seems to me that such a principle does emerge, and that it may be stated as follows:

That the popular books in this list are uniformly books containing *vivid and dramatic presentations of human life, with strong ethical import:* while the books that are distinctly disliked are those in which the primary appeal is esthetic, stylistic, which convey their message indirectly through their beauty or humor, or which present human life, not with bold plainness, but delicately, lightly, subtly.

I believe that all will agree at once that the description of the popular book just given fits every book in our first group of ten. It may be objected, however, that these books make an esthetic apppeal, also, no less perhaps than do the books that are condemned in the other list. That, I take it, is not the point. The point is that in the first group all that is merely esthetic, all the pure beauty, the delicacy, the subtlety, may be *subtracted*—as it is for the high-school student, whose nature has not developed to the point where these things interest him—and still leave a vivid picture of human life, with its "moral," its moving lesson, to appeal to a boy or girl entering upon adolescence and beginning to be interested in human relations and ethical principles. But in the case of *The Ancient Mariner* or the Palgrave lyrics, if you shut your eyes entirely to the mere beauty—or haven't your eyes open to it yet, as is the case with the high-school youngster—what is there left? Wouldn't you put them last yourself?

But it may further be objected that not all of the books in the bottom group are like *The Ancient Mariner* and Palgrave—that the *Iliad*, for example, and Franklin's *Autobiography* present vivid pictures of life, with moral import enough for anybody. This is certainly true. And yet in the *Iliad* does the story, the recital of adventures, really appeal even to us as the story of Shylock, or Silas Marner, or Sidney Carton appeals? Maybe the mere story of the *Iliad* did make an appeal to us once—when we were eight or ten

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years old. But our high-school students have left that stage behind, too. Is it not really the manner of telling, the beauty of simplicity in the naked narrative, that charms us in the Greek epic? And in Franklin—are the bald facts of rather prosaic years the things for which we read, or is it really the bold directness of statement that holds us? But this pleasure in simplicity, in the classic style, is the last reach of esthetic appreciation. Your students will read much of their Palgrave with real enthusiasm and will recite *The Ancient Mariner* in their sleep before they can enjoy the *Iliad* again, or Franklin—enjoy them as we enjoy them. And I believe that something of the same sort will be found to be true of every book of those twelve at the end of the list.

I do not wish to do more than suggest this interpretation and ask you to look over the tables bearing it in mind. The primary object of this paper is, of course, to present the bare facts collected from the data which the members of this Association co-operated in assembling.

THIRTY INDIVIDUAL CLASSES

Below are given, by way of supplement, twenty-nine class rankings such as are described on p. 260 above. These twenty-nine lists have been selected mathematically, being all the lists in which the number obtained for the favored book was as high as 100 (together with two lists headed by 98), and in which the last book had one-half, or less, as many points, roughly speaking, as the favorite. It was considered that a class too small to give 100 points to its favorite book was too small to be significant, separately considered; and that where the number of points assigned to the last book in a list was much over one-half as large as the number assigned to the first book, the ranking was too indecisive to be significant.

It will be noted, on inspection, that the principle of preference deduced above from the general table seems to be confirmed over and over again, almost without exception, in these twenty-nine rankings by individual classes. It is particularly interesting, I think, to see classes of every high-school year and of the most varied sex proportion reacting with such uniformity.

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RANKINGS OF INDIVIDUAL CLASSES

1. Sophomore class: 10 boys, 17 girls
   - *Tale of Two Cities* 102
   - *Vision of Sir Launfal* 65
   - *Ancient Mariner* 53
   - *Sir Roger de Coverley* 44
2. Sophomore class: 28 boys, 33 girls
   - *Tale of Two Cities* 137
   - *Julius Caesar* 96
   - *Ancient Mariner* 70
3. Freshman class: 45 boys, 64 girls
   - *Last of the Mohicans* 258
   - *Merchant of Venice* 252
   - *Ancient Mariner* 144
4. Freshman class: 19 boys, 13 girls
   - *Last of the Mohicans* 122
   - *Treasure Island* 89
   - *Vision of Sir Launfal* 61
   - *Ancient Mariner* 48
5. Sophomore class: 20 boys, 20 girls
   - *Ivanhoe* 160
   - *Enoch Arden* 109
   - *Sohrab and Rustum* 89
   - *Ancient Mariner* 71
6. Freshman class: 22 boys, 21 girls
   - *Ivanhoe* 157
   - *Lady of the Lake* 116
   - *Julius Caesar* 97
   - *Ancient Mariner* 61
7. Junior class: 23 boys, 25 girls
   - *Ivanhoe* 171
   - *Idylls of the King* 148
   - Irving's *Life of Goldsmith* 97
   - Macaulay's *Essay on Johnson* 65
8. Sophomore class: 13 boys, 45 girls
   - *Ivanhoe* 166
   - *Idylls of the King* 114
   - *Sir Roger de Coverley* 77
9. Sophomore class: 10 boys, 23 girls
   - *Ivanhoe* 126
   - *Lady of the Lake* 91
   - Burns's Poems 72
   - Carlyle's *Essay on Burns* 41
10. Freshman class: 38 boys, 39 girls
    - *Ivanhoe* 192
    - *Lady of the Lake* 163
    - *Twelfth Night* 91

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11. Freshman class: 23 boys, 7 girls
    - *Enoch Arden* 101
    - *Vision of Sir Launfal* 89
    - *Julius Caesar* 85
    - *Treasure Island* 44

12. Sophomore class: 14 boys, 15 girls
    - *Silas Marner* 98
    - *Idylls of the King* 71
    - *Macbeth* 55
    - *Essay on Burns* 33

13. Freshman class: 18 boys, 31 girls
    - *Silas Marner* 139
    - *Twelfth Night* 84
    - *Iliad* 71

14. Senior class: 20 boys, 30 girls
    - *Silas Marner* 123
    - Milton's Minor Poems 98
    - *Golden Treasury* 49

15. Sophomore class: 15 boys, 21 girls
    - *Silas Marner* 140
    - *Vision of Sir Launfal* 84
    - *Ancient Mariner* 71
    - *Sir Roger de Coverley* 65

16. Junior class: 23 boys, 20 girls
    - *Macbeth* 127
    - Milton's Minor Poems 74
    - *Sesame and Lilies* 69

17. Junior class: 8 boys, 18 girls
    - *Macbeth* 95
    - Milton's Minor Poems 65
    - *Essay on Johnson* 56
    - Emerson's *Essays* 44

18. Sophomore class: 19 boys, 26 girls
    - *Lady of the Lake* 131
    - Old English Ballads 73
    - *Sir Roger de Coverley* 72

19. Junior class: 18 boys, 22 girls
    - *Merchant of Venice* 108
    - *Iliad* 90
    - *Essay on Burns* 47

20. Junior class: 13 boys, 19 girls
    - *Merchant of Venice* 103
    - *Marmion* 93
    - *Midsummer Night's Dream* 56
    - *As You Like It* 54

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21. Junior class: 15 boys, 34 girls
    - *Idylls of the King* 129
    - *Julius Caesar* 101
    - *Sesame and Lilies* 58
22. Junior class: 13 boys, 33 girls
    - *Idylls of the King* 108
    - *House of Seven Gables* 98
    - *Sesame and Lilies* 59
23. Junior class: 14 boys, 17 girls
    - *Idylls of the King* 136
    - *Macbeth* 102
    - *Bunker Hill Oration* 79
    - *Essay on Johnson* 66
24. Sophomore class: 40 boys, 52 girls
    - *Idylls of the King* 297
    - *Sir Roger de Coverley* 247
    - *Ancient Mariner* 244
    - *Essay on Johnson* 137
25. Freshman class: 47 boys, 59 girls
    - *Vision of Sir Launfal* 245
    - *Iliad* 196
    - *Sketch Book* 185
26. Junior class: 17 boys, 29 girls
    - Burns' Poems 154
    - *Golden Treasury* 136
    - *Essay on Burns* 103
    - Burke's *Conciliation* 76
27. Freshman class: 15 boys, 24 girls
    - *Dog of Flanders* 104
    - *Marmion* 79
    - *Iliad* 52
28. Junior class: 9 boys, 11 girls
    - *Ben Hur* 98
    - *Tale of Two Cities* 74
    - *Ivanhoe* 59
    - *Scarlet Letter* 44
    - *Vicar of Wakefield* 28
29. Sophomore class: 33, boys 39 girls
    - *Silas Marner* 167
    - *Sohrab and Rustum* 153
    - *Twice Told Tales* 85

PRACTICAL CONCLUSION

The writer has been asked, by persons who seemed disposed to grant that the principle of preference stated above is more or less conclusively established and probably true, whether or not he

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would himself care to act upon it by dropping from our lists of reading some of the books in our bottom group. Such a question carries us, of course, far beyond the scope of a paper like the present, which aims merely to give certain facts in regard to the expressed preferences of a group of students and to suggest a possible interpretation of the results. Granting both the facts and the interpretation, the cue for action is still far from complete. Under certain theories of formal discipline and educational values, the logical conclusion would be to drop out all the first ten books and to use exclusively the unpopular kind. As an expression of personal opinion merely, the writer would reply to the question asked that, from his own experience as a teacher and his memories of his own high-school days, he believes that a taste for reading and a growth of appreciation proceed more readily from books in which the student feels some interest than from books which he actively dislikes; and that, therefore, in a short and crowded course, when only a very little can be read, the principle of preference should guide to a considerable extent. In other words, if I were myself at the present time in charge of a high-school English course, I should drop out the books in our lower group, and some others like them—i.e., *books characterized by a predominance of the purely esthetic in their appeal*—and should use mainly books having the general characteristics common to our ten favorites—*vivid, dramatic presentation of human life, and strong ethical appeal.*

There is no danger, I presume, so long as we confine our lists to books that are literature, of including any piece that will not afford enough in the way of beauty, style, and the like, to supply the needs of any nascent esthetic taste that may develop in precocious individuals during the high-school stage. Surely such a taste is more likely to be aroused and developed in connection with a strong interest, of the kind already natural to the student, in a moving human story, than by administering strong doses of beauty, given "straight" as it were, in the form of loathsome dryness—for "dry" is the comment gratuitously added perhaps a thousand times, in the lists on which this paper is based, to the books of the class represented in our bottom group.

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A COMPOSITION ON RED INK[1]

ALFRED M. HITCHCOCK
Public High School, Hartford, Conn.

Red ink is to our profession as drugs are to the medical profession. We cannot, or think we cannot, get along without it. But these are well-nigh drugless days. The medicine cabinet is smaller than it used to be; the few bottles it still contains are smaller. I do not look to see red-inkless days; yet the time may come, and soon, when shallower ink-bottles will be the mode. I hope such a time will come soon, for this I have noticed: whereas doctors, wisely or unwisely, may administer drops and pills unnumbered without feeling personal discomfort, teachers who administer large quantities of red ink all too frequently grow thin and pale and dim of eye. I would gladly hasten the coming of such a time, and with this laudable purpose in mind I shall jot down all of the ways I can think of in which red-ink economy may be practiced. Among these ways will be found nothing novel, certainly nothing revolutionary; my scrip contains but simples long known to the trade.

1. *Call for less written work.* We have been composition-mad for ten years. Never mind what Harvard thinks and does. Methods partially successful in a college may not be appropriate for secondary schools. There is such a thing as overtraining. A few furlongs of the right sort of composition may be vastly more effective than as many miles of the humdrum variety.

2. *Call for shorter themes.* I believe firmly in occasional long compositions—six to eight hundred words, say, coming once or twice a term. They are necessary if we are to teach our pupils how to collect and organize material; how to maintain a logical or dramatic sequence; how to get from the brain more than lies merely on the surface, easily skimmed. But a large amount of necessary training can just as well be carried on through the writing of twenty-minute or half-hour compositions, provided most of these compositions are written leisurely, carefully, not in classroom but at

[1] Read before the New England Association of Teachers of English.

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home, where the pupil has opportunity to weigh and consider his words and correct careless mistakes before handing in his work.

3. *Use the wastebasket.* But let the basket stand in front of the desk, not behind it. Don't put written work in it yourself; let the pupils put it in, and promise them that you will not take it out. This applies to written work done in classroom—not to all of it, of course, but to some of it. Pupils are more sensible than we give them credit for being. They can be made to understand that while it is good to have one's work carefully criticized, much can be gained by simply writing as well as one knows how. They can be made to understand that a live teacher is better than a dead one, and that red-ink correcting, if persisted in, kills inch by inch.

4. *Use college binders*, preserving in them all exercises done at home. Let the pupils keep these binders. Why? Because you must insist that before writing composition number two they examine composition number one and see what red-ink suggestions have been made. Otherwise, being but children, they will make the same mistakes over and over, which must be corrected over and over. But the binder method is of great service to the instructor in another way. He, too, before correcting the second composition, turns back to the first, notes his earlier prescriptions, reviews his patient's case, and is thereby enabled to prescribe more wisely a second time. He sees when to mete out encouragement, when to come out boldly with rebuke; he makes his red ink count. I know the objections; there are two of them: first, binders are heavy to carry about; second, compositions are passed around and make their appearance in other classrooms. But there are light-weight binders, and compositions—half a dozen or a dozen of them—do not weigh much. We teachers need exercise; it does us good to fetch and carry. As for dishonesty, there will be more or less of it under any system; there is very little of it under some teachers no matter what the system. This I believe to be true regardless of systems: the teacher who never trusts his pupils is a rapid breeder of dishonesty. Pupils behave just about as well as they think you think they are going to behave.

5. *Choose sensible subjects.* I cannot write acceptably about that concerning which I know little or have little interest. As I

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look back over years of service as a teacher of composition, it seems to me that of all my blunders the blackest have to do with assigning topics out of the pupils' range of interest or comprehension. Of course youngsters will flounder; of course they will twist sentences and make grotesque paragraphs, and call for gallons of red ink, if they are continually beyond their depth. How can one find what subjects are acceptable? Ask the pupils, or let them choose one from among several topics that you hope may interest them. Keep strict account from year to year of your failures and your successes. Make as careful a study of boys and girls as you have made of Shakespeare and Milton.

6. *Make your tasks definite.* "I didn't understand what you wanted" is a very common excuse in my classes, and usually it is an honest one. Children are but children; they misunderstand very easily, and, misunderstanding, what a mess they sometimes make of things—handing in three pages when you wanted but one or one when you wanted three, an imaginary adventure when you craved personal experience, etc. If I live to be ninety, I shall continue to fail to make my assignments understood, and each failure will call for red ink.

7. *Anticipate errors.* Anyone who has taught five years with his eyes open knows what are the common errors. He can rattle off twenty of them without taking breath. He knows what words are commonly misspelled. It is neither easy nor pleasant to invent exercises to correct these errors; but that is the sensible, the economical, thing to do. Drill, drill, drill, orally when possible; go over these common errors time and time again. Use the blackboard freely to point out mistakes in spelling and punctuation and diction and construction. Anticipate—head off! Otherwise, what a lot of red ink it does take. I estimate that I save an hour or two every fall, when the Seniors begin reading Macaulay, by directing attention, as if I were a showman exhibiting a wonder, to the remarkable way in which Macaulay spells his name—not *Mc*, nor *ly*, nor *ley*, nor *ie*, but M-a-c-a-u-l-a-y.

8. *Teach theme-organization through co-operation.* That is, have the class as a whole plan out composition after composition co-operatively, the teacher standing at the board and jotting down

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topics—heads and subheads—as they are suggested by this pupil and that. Let them see a plan grow before their eyes. It is a sovereign remedy for *the sprawls*, a common malady; and the class, you will note, does all the work.

9. *Decline to correct careless work.* Not in anger, of course, but with politeness, assuming that the pupil has misunderstood or has not fully realized what was expected, or—what you please. You simply take for granted, having read a paragraph or two, that the pupil prefers to rewrite and you graciously grant the privilege. The pupil will understand—and perhaps will explain that company came unexpectedly the night before; or that Wednesday is his hard day anyhow and he has to let something slip by; or that after writing one composition which did not suit he tore it up and hurriedly wrote a second not as good as the first; or perhaps it was merely a case of toothache. The golden rule is so short that it just reaches round a small red-ink bottle.

10. *As often as you receive a praiseworthy theme, tack it up somewhere; don't conceal it.* Or, better still, read it to the class, call attention to the good things, and confess that you wish you had written it yourself. Honest praise is the best of all tonics; the other kind of praise is worth just about as much as other quack remedies.

11. *Don't be a ferret.* Overlook many errors. Take it for granted that some blunders are but the marks of youthfulness; let them alone and they will disappear in due time. And don't try to make a purse out of a whistle. Some young people haven't much to say and never will have. If a boy has a commonplace mind—or worse—he ought to produce commonplace themes—or worse; and if he has expressed himself within 10 per cent of his maximum of intelligence I am not sure but he should receive a mark of ninety even though his compositions, on an absolute scale, merit but twenty or thirty. This rule does not hold in mathematics, nor in Latin, nor in the teaching of literature, perhaps; I believe it does hold in the teaching of composition, where the instructor's duty is so to train the pupil that he will be able to express himself, regardless of whether that self be a Milton or a mollusk.

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12. *Give a personal conference whenever it is possible.* It would be well if all correction could be made in this natural way. But in large schools it is usually impossible to get a pupil when you want him. Other studies have their claim, and inter-departmental courtesy is a beautiful thing. For the most part, we must teach by correspondence. Yet there are pupils who can be reached in no other way than by conference. Then take ten minutes at recess time or after school? It may save half a bottle of ink, but I look upon it as a mild form of stealing. Recess time belongs to the pupil; and when school is dismissed, it should be dismissed. Ten minutes before school is better. But if need be, why not call a pupil to the desk during his recitation period, while his mates are busily writing? Or pass up and down the aisles as the pupils are composing, pausing by the side of this one or that who needs attention. The best time to correct an error is the moment it is made.

Twelve is a good number to stop with, and stop I will, regardless of the promise recorded in an earlier paragraph to jot down all the ink-saving devices I could think of; for I seem to hear from many quarters, *All these things have I kept from my youth up.* Yet let me add just one more suggestion: Never have I had explained to me in a satisfactory manner why each recitation in Junior and Senior Latin and French and German should not begin with a five-minute—or three-minute—written exercise in translation, the exercise to be corrected, from the standpoint of English—*English* English; nor why many recitations in history and physics and chemistry should not begin with the writing-out of answers to questions on the lesson for the day, these answers to be corrected from the standpoint of English; nor why it is not excellent drill to have the demonstrations of propositions in geometry occasionally written out in plain English, free from symbols and properly punctuated. *One way to avoid using too much red ink is to let someone else use it!* If this plan of distributing the burden is not acceptable, if the load must be borne by one department alone—an unpedagogical, stupid, ineffectual, cruel method—I very much doubt whether the twelve devices mentioned, or twelve times twelve devices, twelve times as shrewd, will ever win for us the battle we are waging against careless, shiftless expression.

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A RECENT EXPERIMENT WITH MAGAZINE LITERATURE[1]

FREDERICK WILLIAM EDGERTON
Bulkeley School, New London, Conn.

At Bulkeley School last fall we were confronted with the problem of supplying one division of the Junior class with work for one extra period of English each week. As an experiment we took up the study of magazine literature. At the start we had the satisfaction of knowing that not enough systematic teaching of the subject had been done in the schools of the land to supply us with rigid rules of guidance. We knew we might wander where we would, either into the "sturdy prose" of the serious life, or into the poetry of field and forest, or into the stories of the busy marts of trade, or by the sometimes quiet and sometimes turbulent, many-hued, winding stream of fiction.

Do you remember the schoolmasters of the early pages of *Les Miserables?* "These masters attend the fairs. . . . . They are known by the quills which they wear in their hat bands. Those who teach only how to read have one quill; those who teach reading and arithmetic have two; and those who teach reading, arithmetic, and Latin have three. . . . ." "An Experiment with Magazine Literature"—yes, another quill. How that hat band lengthens! For the teacher of English it has a resemblance to the headgear of the American aborigines. Witness another quill added.

I have told you why we introduced the study of magazine literature. Let me go on to state how. Our aims were not at all pretentious: we did not care for microscopic analyses of plots and characters; we wished merely to arouse the interest of the boys in the reading of the best magazines; we aimed to have them read for the love of reading. So we began our experiment with a few simple facts:

"Narration is that form of discourse which states a sequence of related events occurring in time. Description is that form of discourse which describes

[1] Read before the Connecticut Association of Classical and High-School Teachers.

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objects, impressions, or states of mind. Usually description plays a part subsidiary to narration."

"Every story has three elements: the plot, that is, the events or happenings: the setting, that is, the place where and the time when these events occur; and the characters who are concerned in the events. The plot may be a simple or a complicated one. *Something happens to someone somewhere some time.*"

These were our data. To them we added the commands:

Take careful notes on plot, setting, and characters.

Point out time, place, and characters. In each case state which is presented first.

Make quotations of well-turned phrases, sentences, etc.

With these directions in mind to help or hinder, we proceeded to the reading. One story or article a week was the usual rate of progress. To facilitate the reading, announcements of assignments were made two weeks in advance. And even then pupils would often ask, "What are we going to read next?" Think of it, they voluntarily kept up to the assignments!

Although kept busy searching for suitable readings, the teacher was able to find several excellent ones especially adapted to the needs of a class of high-school boys. The following list shows those chosen:

1. "The Daughter of the Storage," by William Dean Howells, in *Harper's Magazine*, September, 1911.
2. "The Mansion," by Henry van Dyke, in *Harper's Magazine*, December, 1910.
3. "Our Losing Fight against Fire" (two articles), by Edward F. Croker, in *World's Work*, August and September, 1911.
4. "Miss Hinch," by Henry S. Harrison, in *McClure's Magazine*, September, 1911.
5. "The Insurance Agent," by Harvey J. O'Higgins, in *McClure's Magazine*, October, 1911.
6. "The Courage of the Commonplace," by Mary Raymond Shipman Andrews, in *Scribner's Magazine*, July, 1911.
7. "Captain Blaise," by James B. Connolly, in *Scribner's Magazine*, August, 1911.
8. "The Chess Players," by Olive M. Briggs, in *Scribner's Magazine*, August, 1911.
9. "Going to School," editorial in the *Outlook*, August 26, 1911.

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10. "An American Myth," by Henry Cabot Lodge, in the *Outlook*, August 26, 1911.
11. "Uncle Noah's Christmas Inspiration," in the *Ladies Home Journal*, December, 1911.

Of course, we had to surmount the difficulty of supplying the class with enough copies of a magazine. We took the means at our disposal and suited it to our needs. From the public library we secured the circulation copy of a magazine and kept it at school on the teacher's desk in the study hall. The members of the class were instructed that any boy might borrow the magazine to read during a study hour, but that he was not allowed to put it in his desk or take it home. However, we did, upon occasions, permit a boy to take the copy home at night upon his agreeing to return it at the opening of school the next morning. The circulation copy at school and the additional reserve copy at the public library enabled us to have each boy of the seventeen in the section do the assigned reading. To be sure, the announcements of readings two weeks in advance helped to distribute the demand somewhat. And then, too, the week intervening between recitations gave time for each boy to do his reading either at school or at the public library. In one or two instances, members of the class bought copies of the magazines and lent them out gratis. Strange to relate, no boy reported that his people at home were subscribers for the magazines read.

Thus far I have been speaking for the most part about the theory of the experiment with magazine literature. What happened in practice may interest you more.

The nature of the reading governed the method of the recitation. When the class had a story to discuss, students and teacher established the fundamental facts: Who was the someone? Where was the somewhere? What was the some time? What happened? They discussed the order and the manner of introduction of the time, the place, and the characters. Then, in an informal way, some stated why they liked the story, designated the parts they thought true to life, indicated the part they found most interesting, etc. Occasionally the members retold the story in condensed form, each contributing his share to the retelling. Any discussion not

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remote from the story was pursued. Teacher and pupils compared, contrasted, and exchanged opinions of the story. For two or three of the readings special plans of work were followed. The method was adapted to the reading.

Such was the case when the class read Mr. Lodge's "An American Myth." Here the pupils made a carefully constructed outline, consisting of main and subtopics, of the first four paragraphs. The reason for using these four paragraphs was that they form the introduction to the essay and are developed according to the essay model which Irving followed—a model which the class had studied. The pupils found that all the paragraphs began with topic sentences. These they used for main topics and reduced each remaining sentence in the paragraphs to a subtopic. A week after making it, the pupils spent the recitation time in expanding the outline into a theme. This they compared with the original.

The class discussion of the essay dealt with the truth and falsity of written history. But no effort was made to do more than discuss the facts given by Mr. Lodge.

Another instance where a special method was employed was with "Uncle Noah's Christmas Inspiration." Particular attention was directed to the skilfully written introduction of this narrative. In the form of a list, the pupils arranged the facts as presented in the introduction: twilight, Christmas Eve, coming snow, old plantation of Brierwood, decrepit house, tumble-down barn, barren fields, bygone Yuletides, no negroes now, no blooded stock, no fluttering fowls save one belligerent old turkey gobbler fleeing from a white-haired darkey; in library of house a man; this man Colonel Fairfax; he watches chase; he says to negro, "Uncle Noah . . . . "

Perhaps I ought to say a word about "Our Losing Fight against Fire," written by Chief Croker. You can readily imagine the eager discussions that filled the recitation period. The boys talked about fire apparatus; they retold the stories of big fires of which they had read; they gave impromptu accounts of firemen's feats of daring. There were enough stimuli in the assigned reading to last through a half-dozen recitations.

The reading of "Miss Hinch" produced a somewhat similar result. The mystery unfolded in the story brought out such

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questions as: Why was the old lady interested in the newspaper? Did you think that the clergyman was playing a part? How did his actions mislead you? Whose identity were you suspicious of first? What did you expect would be the ending of the story? How far had you read into the story before you began to think that Miss Hinch was one of the characters of whom you were reading?

In my list I did not mention "Stover at Yale" by Owen Johnson, in *McClure's Magazine* for October, 1911. This first chapter of a serial was chosen for the purpose of getting the boys interested in Mr. Johnson's writings. No further work was done with the story, but hints about the delights of "The Varmint" and "The Tennessee Shad" were given. Those hints have been taken.

That a school boy can appreciate what he reads is, perhaps, a debatable question. Certain it is that he can be led to see some virtue even in magazine literature. To establish my contention, let me quote from the notebook of a boy in the magazine literature class a few of the passages he liked best:

From "The Mansion":

1. "Only those labors in which the sacrifice is greater than the wages."
2. "Only those gifts in which the giver forgets himself."

From "Our Losing Fight Against Fire":

1. "That building was as near fireproof as man could make it, but it was not deathproof."
2. "It was a nightmare—fight-maddened firemen fighting a fire which would not be beaten."

From "Miss Hinch":

1. "There was only one such chin in the world and the very urchins on the street would have known it at a glance."

From "The Insurance Agent":

1. "It's a queer world, and it's full of all kinds of different sorts o' queer people."

From "The Courage of the Commonplace":

1. "A sentence of it came to the boy's struggling mind. 'The courage of the commonplace is greater than the courage of the crisis,' the orator said. That was his chance—'the courage of the commonplace.' No fireworks for him, perhaps ever, but, by Jove, he could prove himself worthy."

From "The Chess Players":

1. ". . . . the clouds drifting off from their summits like smoke, delicate, fleecy, hardly to be distinguished from the snow-fields themselves."

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After a few more words I shall leave with the reader for final decision the question: What did the experiment with magazine literature accomplish? Those few words I am going to quote from themes written by boys in the magazine literature class. The subject was: "The Benefits of Magazine Reading."

1. "Many accurate photographs appear in the magazines. The reader can look at what he is reading about."

2. "I have found that magazines contain articles of a character not found in books or newspapers."

3. "Magazines are educational and instructive."

4. "In connection with the magazine work, I have read many other amusing, interesting, and entertaining stories and articles."

5. "To keep in touch with the events of the day and of the world at large, it is necessary to read magazines."

6. "I used to let good stories find me instead of finding them."

7. "Now I often stop to read a second time some of the stories I think interesting."

Such was our experiment.

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WANTED: A HIGHER STANDARD OF SPEECH[1]

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A problem which must present itself to most teachers of English in America is how to obtain any connection between theory and practice. Rules for correctness may be learned in grammar; rules for effectiveness may be studied diligently in rhetoric; but the non-application of those rules is most evident in the written work presented by pupils in every high school, and striking neglect of these same rules shows itself in the speech of the youth of the whole American continent.

Generally speaking, speech is a matter of social environment, and the difficulties of the teacher of English in the public schools should be measured by the intelligence or by the illiteracy of the surrounding community. As a recent writer says of teaching English, "The teacher often sows on soil choked by the weeds of bad habit." Especially must this be so in such a community as Pittsburgh, where we possess a language of barbarisms gathered from the Irish-English, Italian-English, Pennsylvania-Dutch, and modern American slang. These peculiarities of Pittsburgh diction are not confined to any substratum of society but are common to the youth of all sorts and conditions of classes. Care for exactness in oral expression is seemingly regarded as an affectation, a matter of interest only to "grown ups." To find ambiguous English we need not go to the Pennsylvania-Dutch for the amusing and often-quoted phrases "Ma's on the table"; "Pa's most et up"; "Come and eat yourself." We can find it all about us. The youth in our modern schools may be taught "good use." He may understand and recite most intelligently on solecism, impropriety, and provincialism. He may discourse fluently in an English recitation on exact choice of words. Half an hour later we may hear from those same fluent lips, "Gee! ain't it rotten!"; "It's quite a

[1] Read before the Association of English Teachers of the Upper Ohio Valley at Pittsburgh, March 16, 1912.

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ways"; "That's all the further I've learned"; "My mother wouldn't leave me go." It is a matter of supreme indifference to him whether it is more correct to say, "I shall be happy" or "I will be happy," "I wish I was there" or "I wish I were there."

How many pupils consider grammar as a necessity of their everyday speech? Roger Ascham, the beloved tutor of Queen Elizabeth and of Lady Jane Grey, wrote in some such fashion: "Let every pupil learn the rules of his grammar book so that he by himself be able to fetch out of his grammar every rule for every example." The rules would be somewhat difficult to "fetch out" for such examples as, "I wrote it like you told me to"; "Was you there?"; "It was him"; "I want off of the car"; "The wall was that high"; and yet these are expressions which have become so familiar to us that we no longer shudder when they greet our ears. We sadly agree with Emerson in his statement that "the parent may send his son to the master but the schoolfellows educate him."

Not every child is born with Samuel Johnson's taste for words and love of etymology; or with Stevenson's affection for the right expression; or, to come nearer home, with the sense of language possessed by my little friend of three years of age who used to make his wants known after he got into bed by calling, "Please come to interest me with a fairy tale." But almost every child is born with the pleasure of imagination, so that he will listen to a fairy tale with ears wide open and with eyes fixed with a steady-seeing gaze on the beloved story-teller. Here is no slovenly attention, as will be found to the story-teller's chagrin if she be coaxed to retell the tale. Apparently no phrase or turn of expression has been lost, and woe betide the narrator if she dares to substitute one word for another. If the child repeats the story, he shows how rapt his attention has been by using in a quaint way very many of the exact expressions and of even the difficult words. Now where is this sense of language lost? These valuable traits of observation, imitation, and exactness in language seldom reach the high school. There the recultivation begins, with methods burdensome to the teacher and wearisome to the student.

Is there no way of inculcating a necessity for better speech?

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Is there any means of inspiring pupils with an idea that both good manners and refined speech are a standard measure of culture in all civilized countries? Can we not follow the examples of the European countries where emphasis is placed on the cultivation of oral expression? It is certain that in countries such as France, Germany, and England much care is given to the manner in which the pupil expresses himself. Speech there seems to be regarded as a serious and active agent in forming habits, in building character, in acquiring power of thought, in creating ideas. When the school education is finished, it stands as a symbol of polish and civilization, and it becomes, eventually, a means of achieving social and professional success.

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COMPOSITION AS A MEANS OF CULTIVATING LITERARY APPRECIATION

MABEL LODGE
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It is my purpose in this article to set forth a method of teaching college courses in English composition, based on the assumption that the chief purpose of such courses is to make the student intelligently appreciative of his ordinary reading. Since only a small percentage of the students who pass through the colleges—so small in fact that it is almost negligible—ever write anything that can be classed as literature, and since the great majority are readers, cultivation of literary appreciation would seem to be a legitimate function of the college course. The method here presented does not, however, lay any less emphasis upon writing than if its sole intention were to make authors.

To one untaught in technique, the product of any representative art must stand or fall on content. The layman's admiration for artistic nonentities is notorious. Of course, among even ordinarily cultivated people, there is no such thing as absolute technical ignorance. Most people have some appreciation of pictures, books, and music which is not based on mere content. The question is of degree of ignorance. Literature is a representative art. The reader untaught in technique judges literature from the point of view of material. He likes a piece because the content pleases him. But in addition to the appreciation of content, there is an appreciation of technique which is capable of cultivation. I have noticed that many students need to be taught to appreciate Poe's stories. The reason is not far to seek. They do not like the kind of material that Poe uses. It would be singular if many of them should like the morbid horrors that he has conjured up. But interest them in the technique of story-writing, let them find out how stories are made, what devices are used to gain particular effects; then Poe becomes wonderful to them. They do not care for Poe's material more now than before, but

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they appreciate Poe's stories; they have had opened up to them the wonders of Poe's structural genius.

What is true of stories is true of any literary field. It is possible by training students on the technical side to open up to them literary fields from which their standard of taste from the point of view of material would debar them. One can readily find an analogy. A woman who has attempted to sew has a keener appreciation of a well-made garment than one who has never had a needle in her hand. She may never care to make such a garment. She may have no use for it. She may think that the material in it is positively ugly. But she appreciates the fine sewing. The appreciation of the woman who is technically ignorant may be worth more in particular cases; she may appreciate the relation of the garment to life—not because of her technical ignorance, however, but in spite of it. Give to her, in addition to her superior endowments, the technical training of her sister, and her appreciation will be increased in a far higher ratio than the isolated value of the technical training would imply; for the dependence of material upon technique is so subtle that it is impossible to say how much an understanding of mere form adds to the appreciation of form and content combined.

If the purpose of composition is to cultivate literary appreciation, why write themes at all? Why not set the student to analyzing literary masterpieces, in order that he may increase his appreciation of them by discovering their technique? Literary analysis is a good thing; but, unfortunately, to begin with it is to begin the study of technique at the wrong end. It implies perfect familiarity with all the literary devices used by great writers, while as a matter of fact the undergraduate is familiar with few of them. He can no more be expected to appreciate a literary masterpiece by analyzing it than the woman who has never sewed can be expected to appreciate the work of the seamstress by ripping up the garment.

If I may be permitted to relate a chapter from my own experience, I should like to set forth a method of teaching composition which makes the subject absolutely dependent upon literature. I do not contend that it teaches anyone to write, though I believe that claim could as readily be made for it as for any of the methods

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of which the intention is to teach expression. My sole contention is that it cultivates literary appreciation.

To begin, I make no attempt to connect textbooks on rhetoric with the students' written work. The scope of such books is too inclusive. They talk learnedly of force, elegance, exposition, description, and other terms which involve a knowledge of a wide literary field. I do not use them because I have too much respect for their intention; mine is infinitesimal in comparison. My idea of perfect felicity in teaching composition is to have a class to whom a textbook on rhetoric would be of value in writing; such a class would indeed appreciate widely.

The big literary principles being disposed of with the textbook, I proceed to discover some little ones, which, for convenience, we will call literary devices. (Anything that has ever been used effectively in literature is a literary device.) Then I ask the class to write a paper in which they make use of the same device. I do not select the subject. I do not limit the length. I do not ask for one of the so-called forms of discourse. I merely take care that the class understand the purpose of the device assigned. One illustration will clear up the whole method. Let us assume that the two selections quoted below are the basis of an assignment for a piece of written work.

After the most vehement tirade he would suddenly pause, throw his head back, and give as genuine and kindly a laugh as I ever heard from a human being. It was not the bitter laugh of the cynic, nor yet the big-bodied laugh of the burly joker; least of all was it the thin and rasping cackle of the dyspeptic satirist. But it was a broad, honest, human laugh, which, beginning in the brain, took into its action the whole heart and diaphragm, and instantly changed the worn face into something frank and even winning, giving to it an expression that would have won the confidence of any child. Nor did it convey the impression of an exceptional thing that had occurred for the first time that day, and might never happen again. It rather produced the effect of something habitual; of being the channel, well worn for years, by which the overflow of a strong nature was discharged. It cleared the air like thunder, and left the atmosphere sweet. It seemed to say to himself, if not to us, "Do not let us take this too seriously; it is my way of putting things. What refuge is there for a man who looks below the surface in a world like this, except to laugh now and then?" The laugh, in short, revealed the humorist; if I said the general humorist, wearing a mask of grimness, I should hardly go

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too far for the impression it left. At any rate it shifted the ground, and transferred the whole matter to that realm of thought where men play with things. The instant Carlyle laughed, he seemed to take the counsel of his old friend Emerson, and to write upon the lintels of his doorway, "Whim."

When we speak of the restriction of immigration, at the present time, we have not in mind measures undertaken for the purpose of straining out from the vast throngs of foreigners arriving at our ports a few hundreds, or possibly thousands of persons, deaf, dumb, blind, idiotic, insane, pauper, or criminal, who might otherwise become a hopeless burden upon the country, perhaps even an active source of mischief. The propriety, and even the necessity of adopting such measures, is now conceded by men of all shades of opinion concerning the larger subject. There is even noticeable a rather severe public feeling regarding the admission of persons of any of the classes named above; perhaps, one might say, a certain resentment at the attempt of such persons to impose themselves upon us. We already have laws which cover a considerable part of this ground; and, so far as further legislation is needed, it will only be necessary for the proper executive department of the government to call the attention of Congress to the subject. There is a serious effort on the part of our immigration officers to enforce the regulations prescribed, though when it is said that more than five thousand persons have passed through the gates at Ellis Island, in New York Harbor, during the course of a single day, it will be seen that no very careful scrutiny is practicable.

It is true that in the past there has been gross and scandalous neglect of this matter on the part both of government and people, here in the United States. For nearly two generations, great numbers of persons utterly unable to earn their living, by reason of one or another form of physical or mental disability, and others who were, from widely different causes, unfit to be members of any decent community, were admitted to our ports without challenge or question. It is a matter of official record that in many cases these persons had been directly shipped to us by states or municipalities desiring to rid themselves of a burden and a nuisance; while it could reasonably be believed that the proportion of such instances was far greater than could be officially ascertained. But all this is of the past. The question of the restriction of immigration today does not deal with that phase of the subject. What is proposed is, not to keep out some hundreds, or possibly thousands of persons, against whom lie specific objections like those above indicated, but to exclude perhaps hundreds of thousands, the great majority of whom would be subject to no individual objections; who, on the contrary, might fairly be expected to earn their living here in this new country, at least up to the standard known to them at home, and probably much more. The question today is, not of preventing the wards of our almshouses, our insane asylums, and our jails from being stuffed to repletion by new arrivals from Europe; but of protecting the American rate of wages, the American standard of living, and the quality

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of American citizenship from degradation through the tumultuous access of vast throngs of ignorant and brutalized peasantry from the countries of eastern and southern Europe.

The first selection is taken from *Carlyle's Laugh and Other Surprises* by Thomas Wentworth Higginson, the second from *Discussions in Economics and Statistics* by Francis Amasa Walker. In this assignment I would discover with the class the purpose of the negative material. Why does Mr. Higginson in describing Carlyle's laugh tell what it was not? What purpose is served by "It was not the bitter laugh of the cynic, nor yet the big-bodied laugh of the burly joker; least of all was it the thin and rasping cackle of the dyspeptic satirist"? Why is the author not satisfied with telling that the laugh was "broad, honest, human," etc? Why does he say, "Nor did it convey the impression of an exceptional thing that had occurred for the first time that day, and might never happen again"? Why is he not content with "It rather produced the effect of something habitual," etc.? In the second illustration why does Mr. Walker explain at such length what he has not in mind when he speaks of immigration? After making sure that the class understood the purpose of the negative material, I would ask them to use the same device. When the papers were handed in, I would comment upon them from the point of view of effectiveness in the use of the device. Every student would know in advance from what point of view his theme would be judged.

The literary-device method, as well as any other, is, of course, dependent upon the teacher's judgment. The devices selected must be within the student's grasp. Literature abounds with devices suitable for papers of all kinds and of all lengths. The field is inexhaustible. The first paragraph of Irving's "Stage Coach," for example, involves a device easy to use and suited to a paper of seven or eight pages; the first chapter of Meredith's *The Egoist* introduces a device difficult to use and significant in a whole book.

My only reason for going to literature instead of to textbooks on rhetoric is that I find from experience that the devices set forth in textbooks—for description, elegance, and force are literary

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devices—are too big for the student to grasp; and that the average Freshman enters college with a high degree of respect for language by rule, and a corresponding ignorance of the literature upon which all principles that are worthy of consideration are based. It is necessary that the student be given principles that he can grasp and equally necessary that he be able to see the foundation of such principles in literature. That principles governing discourse are based upon literary usage is little understood in practice in the colleges, though it is set forth in theory. Even faculties sometimes show their ignorance of it or contempt for it by handing over the courses in Freshmen composition to teachers whom they would not trust with a course in literature.

Two objections to the method of teaching composition outlined above are immediately evident. First, if the student is required to use other men's devices, he is prevented from originating any of his own; second, the method is scrappy, in that it makes no attempt to cover the field of composition; it contents itself with fragments. The first objection is theoretical, not practical. I have yet to find a student who has originated anything in technique. This is not surprising. Novices are not expected to become inventors. Whoever makes an invention in any field must first be familiar with the existing devices which are utilized for the purpose. A student has a chance of originating something in technique after he has made himself familiar with the devices already in use. He knows in what respects the old devices are not adapted to his purpose.

The charge of scrappiness cannot be combated; it must be admitted. But does the student get anything but scraps in the *laissez-faire* method of theme writing? He may have a text on rhetoric in which the principles governing all discourse are set forth, but that aids him little in actual writing. If he attempts to follow the principles, they are too general to be of much value to him. He proceeds without direction and has returned to him a corrected theme on which the criticism deals with a fragment of the field of literature. The question is whether it is better to set the student to work on a fragment selected with discrimination by the teacher, or to let him produce, undirected, a piece of work

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which will be a fragment in any case, however fully his textbook may set forth the principles governing all discourses. Besides, to produce themes covering all the forms of discourse does not necessarily imply a wide range. As a matter of fact the devices employed by most students are limited, so that whatever the subject assigned the student runs through his repertoire. Some of the commonest literary devices are never employed by students. One has only to check up the devices used by a student in a series of themes to discover how narrow is his technical range.

I have set forth my own method of teaching composition, because it is founded on what seems to me the chief purpose of the college course in composition—the cultivation of literary appreciation. Appreciation of content in literature is determined by everything that enters into individual lives. The composition teacher cannot determine what kind of material the student will choose in his reading. He can put him in the way of judging his reading not only on content but on technique. He can widen his literary field, for he can cause the student to add to the literature which he likes for the content the literature which he likes for the technique.

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A REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON UNIFORM ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS IN ENGLISH

ARTHUR WILLIS LEONARD
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The National Conference on Uniform Entrance Requirements in English met at Teachers College, New York City, on Thursday morning, February 22. Twenty-three delegates were present, as follows: from the New England Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools, W. A. Neilson, Harvard University, A. M. Hitchcock, High School, Hartford, Conn., A. H. Ward, Milton Academy, Milton, Mass.; from the Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools of the Middle States and Maryland, F. H. Stoddard, New York University, C. G. Child, University of Pennsylvania, T. C. Mitchill, High School, Jamaica, New York; from the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, F. N. Scott, University of Michigan, J. F. Hosic, Chicago Teachers College, E. L. Miller, Central High School, Detroit, Mich.; from the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, C. W. Kent, University of Virginia, J. L. Henderson, University of Texas, J. R. Hunter, Emory and Henry Preparatory School; from the College Entrance Examination Board, Wilson Farrand, Newark Academy, E. J. Goodwin, Packer Collegiate Institute, A. W. Leonard, Phillips Academy, Andover, Mass.; from the Conference of New England Colleges on Entrance Requirements in English, W. L. Cross, Yale University, F. P. Emery, Dartmouth College, C. T. Winchester, Wesleyan University; from the College Conference on English for the Central Atlantic States, F. T. Baker, Teachers College, New York, M. W. Sampson, Cornell University, A. H. Quinn, University of Pennsylvania; from the English Round Table of the National Education Association, B. A. Heydrick, High School of Commerce, New York, C. S. Thomas, Newton, Mass., High School, together with Mr. Hosic and Mr. Miller, named above.

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The total number of delegates, twenty-three, exceeded by five the total number present at the conference of 1909, the College Conference on English for the Central Atlantic States being admitted to membership during this meeting, and the delegates from the Committee on Entrance Requirements of the English Round Table of the National Education Association being invited to participate in the discussion, but without voting power.

The division of opinion among the members of the Conference may be roughly indicated by a brief examination of the representation. Geographical distribution was, on the whole, of slight importance, beyond the fact that it was known or surmised beforehand that the East would for the most part stand for conservatism, while the Middle West and New York would favor radical change. Local needs and interests, therefore, and personal convictions based largely upon them, determined the trend of sentiment and the character of the discussion. Of the total number having the right to take part in the debate, the ratio of secondary-school to college representatives (Professor Stoddard of New York University being in the chair) was 10 to 12, or nearly one-half; whereas in 1909 the ratio was 4 to 15, or slightly more than one-fourth. In a discussion which was to turn in some part at least on that much vexed question of "college domination" of secondary schools, this ratio is not without its significance. Of the secondary-school teachers five represented public high schools and five private or endowed preparatory schools. The presence of several members from colleges and universities which have adopted, wholly or in part, the certificating system, had no little influence in determining the prevailing point of view.

After the preliminary business of the meeting had been disposed of, the regular discussion of the main business began. In order that every phase of the matters before the Conference might have a complete hearing, the chairman requested that each delegate, in regular order, should present fully his views on the points at issue. As a basis for this discussion, the chairman of the Executive Committee, Professor Cross, read and commented upon the requirements in literature which the Executive Committee proposed for adoption in 1916–18, a copy of which requirements had

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already been sent to each member for his consideration. The first recommendation of the committee was that for 1916–18 certain changes be made in the lists of books for reading and study already adopted for 1913–15. The changes suggested for English "A" provide for certain additions and substitutions designed to make the groups more suitable for readers of secondary age; those suggested for English "B," having the same purpose in view, offer also a slightly different list each year, with a somewhat freer choice of alternatives than is offered at present.

The second recommendation of the committee was that, in addition to the list of books comprised in English A and English B, a longer list of about one hundred and twenty-five titles—fiction, biography, and drama—including a considerable amount of copyrighted material—be adopted by the schools for supplementary reading. The committee made no formal recommendation regarding the character of the examination by which knowledge and appreciation of these books should be tested.

As the discussion proceeded, two main questions at issue clearly emerged: (1) the nature of the requirement, particularly the requirement in literature; (2) the character of the examination. As might have been expected, the now persistent contention regarding both of these questions, that the tendency is for the university to restrict, if not to dominate, the secondary school, was urged anew. It was pointed out, as with frequent reiteration it has been pointed out before, that the public high school, which, in most cases, sends relatively few of its students to college, must, nevertheless, for the benefit of those few, shape its English course in conformity with the college requirements. It is to be noted, however, that the representatives of the public high schools were not unanimous in support of this view. On the other hand, the sentiment was expressed, though again not unanimously, that even the regular preparatory school, the main business of which is to prepare young people for entrance to college, suffers somewhat severely from limitations in the requirement which the colleges impose. As a fundamental objection against a specific requirement in literature, particularly a requirement so restricted as the one at present existing, or even the one proposed, it was urged that

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it dictates unwarrantably to the secondary teacher, not only what his students shall read, but also when and how, whereas the admission ought to be freely made that in general he can do better if left to himself. And furthermore, it was argued that certain books, even in the later revised lists, have proved insufficiently interesting or not interesting at all to young readers. The solution proposed for this difficulty was to retain the present list, but to widen the choice which it offers, or to offer instead an advisory open list of two or three hundred books, unclassified and containing some copyrighted material.

In opposition to any radical change in the character and content of the lists as offered by the Executive Committee, or as set down in the requirements for 1913–15, it was submitted that these lists are sufficiently liberal as they stand, and that, after all, the evil so vividly painted arises not so much from the sinister nature of the requirement itself as from the inexperienced or unskilful teacher's misuse of it; that is, from his misinterpretation of the intention of the colleges. Moreover, the objections offered to the abandonment of a somewhat restricted list, and the substitution therefor of an open list, or no list at all, were two: (1) that the unskilled or inexperienced teacher needs, and not infrequently welcomes, such guidance and suggestion as a restricted list arranged in groups affords him; (2) that a certain type of teacher—who is devoted more to coaching than to instruction—could and would soon find the easiest way to circumvent such a loose requirement, by preparing his students, for example, in an extreme case, on ten novels, and on nothing else; and (3) that the difficulty of setting an examination on a list of two or three hundred books would prove to be almost insuperably difficult.

The second main point at issue was, as has been said, the character of the examination. This question, in the judgment of some, was the real key to the whole problem, for, since a much repeated and undoubtedly valid objection to a large advisory list of books is the difficulty of setting questions upon them, then, if the examiner should be willing to base his questions, not on a definite list but upon the candidates' general reading, these objections would disappear. Thus a single act would both liberalize

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the requirement and liberate the teacher. Therefore a type of examination at once so liberal that it would satisfy the teacher and so definite—and possibly so rigorous—that it would meet the demands of the colleges, was the real solution to be sought. The adverse criticism of the usual examination set by many of the colleges and the College Entrance Board were that they test neither thinking nor appreciation, but rather call for mere memorizing, preparation for which, beside imposing an unnatural and deadening drill, requires so much time, both in first study and in review, that other more vital English studies are crowded out of the school course. Therefore, as a substitute, it was proposed that the colleges examine to test power—that is, power to write, power to think, power to read and appreciate; that they set such a paper as, for example, the Harvard New Plan paper for 1911: a paper that presupposes the reading and study of literature, but not of a prescribed list of books; that offers, among other things, a test in sustained composition, and in the ability to read and explain intelligently at sight a fairly long and fairly difficult passage of prose or poetry.

The discussion, as it has been thus briefly outlined and summarized, occupied the whole of the first day, until after ten at night. It closed with a few informal suggestions to the Executive Committee embodying some of the ideas brought out during the session.

The Conference reassembled on Friday morning, February 23, at nine o'clock. To ascertain the opinions of the members on certain points, a number of informal votes, of no binding force, were taken, as follows:

1. Should the English requirement be divided into two parts, A and B, as at present? Aye 14, No 1.

2. Should there be an open list of, say, two or three hundred books under English A? Aye 7, No 10.

3. Should alternative *requirements* be set? Aye 12, No 6.

4. Should alternative types of *examination* be set? Aye 13, No 4.

5. Should there be a test on composition and grammar, distinct from the test on literature? Approved unanimously.

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After these informal votes had been taken, formal motions were put and carried, as follows:

It was voted unanimously that the *requirement* (as distinct from the examination) be divided into two parts, the first a requirement in composition and grammar, the second a requirement in literature. For convenience in designation, these requirements were denominated English I and English II. The kind of grammatical study provided for English I is the same as that in the requirements for 1913–15. The division of the requirement into these two parts was made for this purpose: that the candidate who fails in an entrance examination because of the unsatisfactory quality of his composition, may know clearly the reason for his failure, and may prepare to make up his deficiency without re-reading the prescribed books.

It was voted (17 to 2) that the examination on English I consist of the writing of a composition on a subject chosen from the candidate's probable experience, or based upon his reading, and of an examination on the general principles of grammar.

It was further voted that under English II there be set an examination on a prescribed list of books for thorough reading and study. The intent of this motion was that this list be small and contain a sufficient number of alternatives to insure proper freedom of choice. It was the intent of both these motions taken together that these two examinations should not necessarily be given in two different years.

It was further voted that there be a supplementary list made up of books chosen from the present list in English A (i.e., for 1913–15), the proposed supplementary list offered by the Executive Committee, and such other books as may be desirable to meet local conditions and needs, which shall be suggested to the schools as constituting, in the judgment of the Conference, books which may be read with profit in a high-school course, and from which the student shall be required to present evidence of having read at least ten, but which shall not be offered for examination.

It was voted that, as an alternative to the requirement based on the supplementary list, an examination on the A list (i.e., a list equivalent to the A list) be maintained. This was done in

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order that those high schools and preparatory schools which find no serious fault in the present plan may not be forced to accept the new plan.

It will be apparent that English II is a more liberal substitute for English B, and that the requirement for a supplementary list is a liberal substitute for English A; and, moreover, that the two parts together are a compromise between the old and the new.

It was further voted (12 to 6) that the Conference include in its recommendation, as an alternative to English II, that colleges so desiring may set an examination requiring no prescribed books. To many of those who had contended for the complete liberalization of the requirement this alternative seemed the most important and most progressive recommendation of the Conference, in that it gives full recognition to the competence of the secondary English teacher to frame his own English courses to meet the peculiar needs which he discerns on the educational premises with which he is most familiar. The recommendation is, to be sure, merely advisory, but it is the strong hope of many members of the Conference that the College Board and the examining colleges will adopt it. The colleges may feel, and in some cases, no doubt, will feel, that, since such an examination alone will not provide an adequate test, some supplementary test may be necessary; namely, certification on training and content or some substitute therefor. But those who believe in this freer form of examination feel assured, in the light of an increasingly prevalent practice in the country, that it can be easily and satisfactorily put into effect.

The foregoing motions embody the chief recommendations of the Conference. Other incidental or corollary motions are as follows:

It was voted (12 to 1) that the recommendations of the Conference shall include a suggestion that individual colleges take such steps as may be found necessary to ascertain whether candidates for entrance possess an adequate equipment in oral English.

It was voted unanimously that the Conference incorporate in its suggestions to the colleges that in the composition test the candidates should not be expected to write at a speed exceeding 400 words an hour.

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It was voted that the definite formulation of the requirement be referred to a committee which shall report at an adjourned meeting of the Conference. The chairman suggested as the members of this committee, Messrs. Neilson, Cross, Hosic, Farrand, and Hitchcock, and the suggestion was confirmed by the Conference.

It was voted that when the Conference adjourned it should be to meet again on Thursday, May 30, to consider the specific recommendations of the committee as to matters of detail. It is possible that the adjourned meeting may revise some of the decisions of the first.

It was voted that the matter of the time to be spent in school in meeting the English requirement, and of the time to be allowed for the examinations, be referred to the Committee on Formulation.

The Conference adjourned at 12:45, on March 23.

The general spirit of the Conference was marked by a sincere desire to discover the real interests and needs of both the colleges and the schools, and to frame requirements that should meet them fairly, with due regard to just compromise between opposing views. In no previous conference, it seems, have the main issues been so thoroughly examined and discussed; and it is expected that when the new recommendations have been put in final form, they will insure the establishment of a requirement which shall in larger measure than before prove to be permanent, and so prevent that disturbing criticism and revolt which seem rather to have grown than to have diminished with succeeding efforts to secure satisfactory adjustment.

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THE ROUND TABLE

AN EXPERIMENT IN SENIOR ENGLISH

The Trenton, N.J., High School does not claim to be exempt from the current criticism made on the part of business and professional men that high-school graduates cannot spell, write coherent sentences, and develop their ideas logically, and, *in toto*, have few ideas worth expression. To quiet this criticism and to provide a medium of composition work which from its *modus operandi* would secure these things by its peculiar appeal to the students, the writer conceived the following plan of work. He is happy to report that it is working, and he passes it on to any other benighted teachers of English who can see in it any merit or availability for their conditions.

For several years the work of composition in our school has been grouped on this plan: first-year work covers letter-writing, elementary composition in the four forms of discourse, and a measure of oral expression along the same line, interspersed with judicious exercises in sentence structure; second-year work is devoted almost wholly to the systematic study of the paragraph, with an extension of applicable sentence study, spelling, and word analysis; third-year teaching covers entire the matter of description and narration in more enlarged forms, coupled with a study of figures of speech and versification. This arrangement leaves open for the Senior year the subjects of exposition and argument. Until recent years these subjects have been treated in the conventional way. In exposition the details of definition, classification, arrangement, and the rest were first covered, and then themes appropriate worked out, increasing in length until the conventional "long themes" were reached. In argumentation, matters of argument from fact, theory, policy, and principle, inductive and deductive reasoning, the brief, refutation, persuasion, and the whole chain of technicalities were plowed through. When the pupil was loaded up, he was thought fit to begin writing argumentative themes, winding up the whole year with a spell of "long themes" again, culminating at the end of the year with a grand "commencement theme."

We have gotten over this. When a pupil reaches the Senior year he has a reasonable idea of the varieties of paragraph forms required to write effectively in the four forms of discourse. What more is required? "Long themes" are but a succession of paragraphs plus logical connec-

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tion. Therefore the opening months of the Senior year are given to a brief review of the paragraph forms needed for exposition and argument, and only the necessary time is spent on outline work for long themes, with a few assigned. The pupils are then ready for the "scheme."

The teachers of Senior divisions divide the pupils up into committees of either three or four pupils each, labeled as follows: Department of Politics, Business, Science, Literature, Education, Fiction, Social Life, Nature, Civics, and Comment. But the greatest of these is Comment. The pupils serve in these departments for one month; then the teacher makes a new classification, based both on the pupils's preference and the rule that, if possible, each pupil shall serve once in as many different departments as conditions will permit. These departments correspond with the departments of a magazine devoted to reviewing what is going on in the world, of which "Current Literature" is a good type. It is the business of the members of each department to confer, under the direction of the editorial department—the Department of Comment—supervised constantly, of course, by the teacher in charge, choose the best representative topic covering events of that month, read as much as possible on this subject in the newspapers, magazines, and late books, and prepare a theme varying from three to five pages thereon. These themes are gathered in by the general editors, read, and returned for rewriting—the teacher acting as arbiter in doubtful matters—and handed to the teacher for final scrutiny. If the themes need rewriting, this work is then done in ink, typewritten when possible both by the pupils and the typewriting department, and returned to the teacher by a certain time. Two recitation periods are then given to reading aloud and discussing these themes, as to both form and substance. Additional oral information and comment is expected, and "the meeting" intended to be informing and stimulative. The work, of course, in its final form, must be indorsed in a required way, pages numbered, etc., and a bibliography of articles and books stated. We call our "effort" the "Fortnightly Review." When each "issue" is "out," it is clamped together and placed in a conspicuous place for reference and admiration!

For the first two or three issues the teachers arranged all departments and assigned all topics, in many instances referring pupils to definite articles and books. But it is the other way around, now. The pupils take the initiative—a most desirable asset of youth—and inform the teacher of the subject chosen, and the place in which information can be secured. It stands to reason that the teachers have to be wide-awake, and, if they have not read the books and articles in question, they must

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necessarily be sufficiently informed on the matter to know whether the topic is suitable, timely, or adequate in information. The Department of Politics allows for original articles on presidential candidates, trust regulation, abstracts of current articles, and book reviews. The Department of Business covers its field in the same way, specializing on labor difficulties. The Department of Science offers excellent opportunities for reviewing the work of such men as Edison, Tesla, Mme. Curie, etc., and for many notes of the latest achievements in that field. The Department of Literature is popular, for it permits of book reviews, musical and dramatic criticism, and original articles on the ways and work of contemporary writers. The Department of Education is wide in scope. It covers everything from local school problems to the Hague Conference or religious propaganda. The Department of Social Life makes a specialty of women's work, the suffrage movement, and the things of domestic economy and community welfare. The Department of Fiction calls in each issue for an original short story, a descriptive sketch, and a poem. The Department of Nature could properly be called "Out-of-Doors." It covers a range from athletics to weather prognostications. The Department of Civics is a lively member. We have civics taught very effectively in our school. Trenton is the state capital, and we have just adopted commission government. Moreover, we are in the throes of installing better water conditions, enlarging the river front, beautifying the streets, enlarging the parks, building a sewage disposal plant, etc. All this gives much material for use. The Department of Comment must write editorials on editorial topics, and in an editorial way, which condition means close study of the papers and magazines for topics and style. Each member also must supervise a certain number of the other departments and take charge of the matter of getting them in on time. The editor-in-chief has his quota of this work and general direction of the other members of his department. It may be said that two recitations of the week previous to the week of issue are given to work in class to enable the teacher to go over the outlines of the themes which each pupil must prepare by that time, and to make suggestions or extend any help in the composition of the work. The city librarian is enlisted in this task. He sends to the school each month a list of all the leading articles in the magazines on file, bulletins of new books received, and places them on a reserve shelf in the library for our use. The teachers also keep on file on the bulletin board any interesting matter they can find, and current numbers of what magazines they take and can secure, including daily copies of local papers and the

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New York Times, *New York Sun*, the *London Weekly Times*, and the *Congressional Record*.

The following is a sample list of the topics recently treated, given in the order of their respective departments: "Taft's Administration," "The English Insurance Bill," "Socialism in Germany," "Roosevelt on the Panama Canal," "Russia and China," "The Minimum Wage," "The Aldrich Report," "The Work of Madame Curie," "The Sense and Nonsense of Christian Science," "The Progress of Aviation," "Antarctic Exploration," "The American Drama," "The Work of Selma Lagerlöf," "Charles Dickens," "Oscar Hammerstein," "Trenton's Educational Needs," "Uniformity of Educational Standards," "Vocational Training," "The Misfit Child," "The Country School Problem," "The Conservation of Motherhood," "Sensible Dress for Women," "Motion Pictures," "The Evils of the Popular Song," "Schoolhouse Social Centers," "Back to the Farm," "The Work of Jane Addams," "Landscape Gardening," "Sleeping Out-of-Doors," "The Slaughter of the Egret," "Draining the Everglades," "Commission Government," "Trenton's Water Supply," "The Public-Service Corporation," "Local Option," "The Trenton Immigrant," "The New Washington." Samples of editorial topics written upon are: "The High-School Senior," "Graft," "John Bigelow," "High-School Ethics," "Presidential Primaries," "The Decline of Manners," "The Money Trust," "Roosevelt's 'Crime'," "Schools for the Study of Journalism," "The Arbitration Treaty."

From the work done so far in this "experiment," we believe we have attained for the pupil a measure of these four things: initiative, or the ability to think and act for oneself, plus self-reliance; greater breadth and accuracy of knowledge about affairs on which high-school graduates are expected to have some opinions; greater interest in oral and written composition in school work; better form in that expression.

J. MILNOR DOREY

HIGH SCHOOL
TRENTON, N.J.

To the Editor of the "English Journal":

Your request for a copy of the inclosed translation[1] was made known to me by Miss Stickney of our English department. It is with great pleasure that I send it to you.

[1] It is hoped that the publication of the translation may call forth discussion of the value of such exercises as training in English, and also additional examples of good work.—EDITOR.

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I find pupils appreciate Vergil more if they occasionally hear a metrical version of the lesson; and particularly if they attempt metrical translations. So I try to introduce that feature early in the second term of Vergil and offer extra credits for metrical translations.

The translation was made by one of the Seniors, after the following class work. One day, I read Theodore Williams' translation of the review lesson. The class, from the one reading, compared it with the original Latin. The following Friday I had passages from five English metrical translations (Morris, Dryden, Ballard, Long, and Williams) placed on the board. I chose three short passages, 12 to 20 lines, and had two metrical versions of each put side by side. By questions I led the class to compare the English meter with the Latin; to criticize the fidelity of the translation; to express their preference for the versions given and to give reasons for such preference. Then I suggested that I should be pleased to receive original metrical translations from the class.

On the following Monday, Mr. Wenzel brought me the inclosed translation. It is his first attempt at versification. He had read three acts of *Hamlet* and thought it would be a good time to try, when the swing of the iambic pentameter was fresh in his mind. With the exception of four lines, which he changed after criticism, the translation is as he wrote it originally.

I inclose a metrical version of the next nineteen lines by another pupil.

CORA V. HELTZELL

YEATMAN HIGH SCHOOL, DEPARTMENT OF
GREEK AND LATIN, ST. LOUIS, MO.
March 4, 1912

ITALY REVEALED BY THE PENATES
(*Aeneid* iii. 147–71)

'Twas night; deep slumber held the wearied world.
And as I slept, before me seemed to stand,
Distinct where'er the wholly rounded moon
Its silv'ry light through narrow windows poured,
Images of the gods and in their midst,
The Phrygian Penates, whom with me
I'd brought from out the heart of burning Troy,
Appeared to speak and with such words as these
They did, I thought, dispel my every care:
"Those things which Phoebus would foretell to you,
Should you his word at far Ortygia seek,
He here proclaims and all unsought sends us

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Unto your threshold. We have traced your course
Since great Dardania burned and we've traversed
The swollen seas beside your sailing ships.
Likewise shall we exalt—yea to the skies—
Your future sons; and for your city new
We'll grant you pow'r. For mighty destinies
Prepare, then, massive walls and quit not yet
The lengthy labors that embitter flight.
Your colony, however, must be changed.
The Delian god has not approved these shores
Nor ordered you to settle here in Crete.
There is a place, an ancient realm that's famed
As powerful in arms and rich in soil,
A land the Greeks have called Hesperia,
Where was the home of the Oenotrians
And which their sons, so now report avers,
Named Italy from their old leader's name.
Here is the seat the gods have marked for you;
Here Dardanus was born; here birth was giv'n
To father Iasius, progenitor,
From whom has sprung the line of our great race.
Arise then, go, and with rejoicing tell
Your aged father truths, our words reveal.
Seek out Cortona and Ausonian realms,
For Jupiter denies you Cretan fields."

ROBERT N. WENZEL

THE WARNING IS OBEYED
(*Aeneid* iii. 172–91)

Astounded by such sights and voice of gods divine—
Nor was that sleep, but face to face I seemed to see
Their features, veiled hair and present countenance;
Cold perspiration drenched my trembling body then—
I snatched me from my couch and suppliant hands with prayers
To Heaven stretched and on the shrine libation poured
Of purest wine. Rejoicing in a duty done
Anchises I inform with due detail. He calls
To mind the two-fold race and twin progenitors.
He knows that he has been decoyed from destined lands
By new mistakes. He speaks, "O son, thou driven by fates
Of Troy, Cassandra only used to prophesy
Such destinies to me. I now recall that she
Foretold these fates were due our race and often spoke

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Of Western lands and eke Italian states. But who
Would then believe that Teucer's sons would reach the shores
Of Troy? Whom could Cassandra by prophecy move?
Apollo let's obey and warning take from him;
For better omens search." He thus did speak, and all,
With joy, his bidding straightway do. Deserting this
Abiding place, though yet a few are left behind,
We set the sails and navigate the ocean vast.

CLOYD LAPORTE

ELASTICITY IN FRESHMAN ENGLISH COURSES

The more one meditates upon present college problems, the clearer it seems to become that one great source of our troubles is our wholesale method of dealing with divergent types of students. On its purely qualitative side this situation appears to have been relieved, in part at least, by the elective principle, sanely and moderately applied; but the quantitative difficulty remains. By this is meant the delusion that we ought to impose upon all undergraduates identical terms of residence and schedule, regardless of gifts—that, once the dead line of "admission" is passed, all students should take precisely the same number of subjects per week, and remain the same number of years, in spite of differences in intelligence, industry, and previous training. This topic, in its wider bearings, is dealt with by the present writer in an article prepared for the *Educational Review;* our purpose here is to speak of its particular relation to the problem of Freshman English courses, the reason for this brief comment upon the English situation (by a rank outsider) being the extended discussion which this problem has received of late in the correspondence columns of the New York *Nation*.

In the issue of February 29, Mr. Henry Adams Bellows says:

> But let us consider the problem which the teacher of college English has to face. His Freshman students for the most part cannot spell. Their notions of grammar are often either non-existent or hideously warped. Their vocabularies are infinitesimal, and which is worse, their use of the few words that they dare employ without blushing is so loose as to defy definition. . . . . All this the college teacher must fight against, and yet, out of respect for academic traditions, and also in consideration of the saving remnant to whom the English language has not become a snare and a delusion, he must make his work "advanced." He cannot line up his class and institute a spelling-bee; he cannot take as a textbook a primer of grammar. In other words he must try to reconcile two irreconcilable elements. . . . . No reformation of college work

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in writing can hope to alter materially these conditions. The change must come first of all in the schools; for though a college student may be in dire need of a primer, he is beyond the stage when he is likely to profit by it.

Obviously our schools ought to do far better, but it still remains a question whether they *will* do much better in the near future, and whether our colleges are not going to continue for some time to admit a large proportion of relatively illiterate students. Facing this condition, and leaving theories behind, the next question to emerge concerns the possibility of doing anything for these illiterates in college. If teachers of English have already demonstrated that college instruction has no definite effect upon this material, then all that is being said here is beside the mark, and the only way to reform Freshman English is to abolish it. But we shall assume, for the sake of argument, that a residuum of teachableness can still be found in the Freshman; if this be true, one need not hesitate to suggest that the present trouble is with our wholesale courses. In no other subject is elastic individual treatment more important, but the prevalent method is a rigid wholesale one, with the same amount of the same kind of work for all hands, the illiterate and the "saving remnant" alike. What is meant here by the desired "individual treatment" is not our present "theme conference," but the extension and enrichment of the whole course, and the addition of extra hours in which deficient students may be brought up to par in every division of the subject. If this policy were pursued we should hear no more of courses of the old type: "English 1: daily themes; recitations and discussions; 3 hours per week; required of all Freshmen." Instead, we should read in the catalogue something like this: "English 1: required of all students in proportion to their needs, throughout the Freshman year, and into the second year if necessary. The different sections of the class will meet from 2 to 6 times per week, and as many weekly themes will be required as each individual case may justify."

The exact details of such a course should be left to the experts, but we may suggest an outline that may make the case clearer. Subdividing a typical Freshman class of, say, 100 men into various grades (using high-school records, entrance examinations, or a special examination), we might discover three or more categories; for instance, the élite (the upper 25), the average (the middle 50), and the awkward squad. For the men of high rank there would be the minimum of class meetings and theme work. The great mediocre body of students would supply material for at least two sections, which would meet 4 or 5 times a week (partly for extra drill on weak points) and write about twice as many themes

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as section one. The tail-enders ought to be assembled for instruction 5 or 6 times weekly and to write about thrice as many themes as the good men. Added class meetings would afford the desired opportunity for subsidiary training of the most elementary kind. The instructor would have no fear to take "as a textbook a primer of grammar"; that is what the extra meetings would be for. Nor need he hesitate to "institute a spelling-bee"—or perhaps a series of lessons in dictation, of which spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure would be the main objects.

Finally, an arrangement of this kind seems likely to produce two other morally beneficial results, which lie outside of the English department. It would put a premium upon excellence, by attaching an obvious and public reward to high standing and a corresponding penalty to illiteracy. Secondly, it would teach the wholesome lesson that work in this world to which we bring inferior ability or equipment is going to demand an increased expenditure of effort if it is to be honestly done.

PHILIP H. CHURCHMAN

CLARK COLLEGE
WORCESTER, MASS.

To the Editor of the "English Journal":

Your letter tempts me: I think I shall fall. When first I read your invitation to write on the subject of the review of my book[1] of selected poems for use in schools, I hesitated, in the opinion that the issues there raised were not of sufficiently general interest to warrant discussion. But when I reflected that your invitation was general enough to justify a reply of some scope, my hesitation turned to wavering. Then came the reflection that the only way of showing proper respect to temptation is to give in to it; and that decided me.

As far as the review itself is concerned, I fear I cannot get up a respectable controversy; I am too prone to agree with it. In fact, I feel that I anticipated its strictures in the Introduction to the volume in question. The choice of the poems there collected seems to me by no means ideal, and I would gladly have selected differently; but I prepared the book when the College-Entrance Examination Board had just announced its new lists, and had included in them a variety of short poems, notably those from the fourth book of Palgrave. Guided by this list, I chose what seemed best for my purpose, and restricted by

[1] See the review of *Narrative and Lyric Poems for Students* in the *English Journal* for February, 1912.

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space, I supplemented this first selection with representative examples from those departments of poetry—old ballads, etc.—least well represented, hoping thus to give a fairly wide range of choice within limits acceptable to the Examination Board. The result was professedly a compromise, and I welcome the independence of judgment that sees where it might be improved.

What really disturbs your reviewer, however, is the grouping of the poems according to subject or mood. Of the lyric examples so grouped, the conclusion is reached that since "scarcely a poem of any group but could be shifted elsewhere, this kind of classifying breaks down." If the object really were, as is assumed to be the case, to form exclusive logical categories, to the end that the student might learn something from the classification, the criticism would be wholly sound and just; no one could see it more clearly than an editor in the act of making the groups. But except for the groups conceded to be obvious—the old and later ballads, for example—no attention is directed to the principle of classification; on the contrary, the Introduction states frankly the purpose of the grouping: that the student, wandering at will in the volume, and coming across some poem to his fancy, may be encouraged to look near it for something else of similar interest. Palgrave groups his poems loosely in a like manner, and it may be that he is wiser in not labeling his groups; but the thing is done, in either case, for the pleasure of the reader, rather than for the edification of the logical critic. This question of pleasure as an element in the study of poetry leads to certain matters of real concern to those who teach literature, especially in the school. A subject like this, that touches first principles on the one hand, and definite practice on the other, is hard to keep within strict bounds of space; but in taking it up I shall try to err on the side of brevity.

I take it that the ideal end of the school study of poetry—especially the lyric—is an increase of power to enjoy poetry. This is commonplace enough—most ideal formulas are; but it actually means something, once its implications are fairly grasped and accepted. That the power in question is spiritual means that it is intimate and subtly personal, wholly impossible to analyze and estimate, yet for all that an index of individual growth. And this in turn means that the one necessary condition of its genuineness is that it be allowed to develop naturally and exercise itself in spontaneous freedom. If this be accepted, there will perhaps be little difficulty in agreeing that the ideal training is such as Lamb described as that of his sister: being "tumbled early,

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by accident or design, into a spacious closet of good old English reading," and there left to browse at will. Those who have enjoyed that sort of training, or who have learned to read poetry in the family circle, have little to gain from a school course—and perhaps have something to lose.

What is the moral—that we should give up the school course entirely? Hardly that; for the ideal conditions are too seldom met with to bring so extreme a suggestion to the issue. But certainly we should make the conditions of our course as favorable as possible for the same kind of results. And there's the rub: how?

Perhaps the best approach to this practical question is to ask ourselves what advantages, if any, we, as adults who care for poetry, have over our students, in taking up a new volume of verse. If we are honest, we are quick to acknowledge that in some respects they may have the advantage over us; but that need not concern us now.

In the first place, then, we may assume an experience of life greater than theirs, a maturity that opens the way to a response of wider range, perhaps of deeper quality. Again, our experience with the imaginative ways of expression is greater—our quickness to see the significance behind the fact, the idea behind the symbol, the sense behind the figure. And this, if we reflect, is gained by the simple process of familiar contact with poetry as a mode of imaginative expression, just as we gain power, through living with pictures, to see in them more than illustration, or literal representation.

Then, too, we have the advantage, it may be, of a more sensitive ear for the subtleties of verse music, a more experienced sense of the values of verse form in line and stanza. We read, though to ourselves, as if aloud, listening alike to the fall of the sounds and the underlying rhythmic swing of the meter; and we recognize the part that the lesser units play in the woven whole that is the poem. To some degree this musical sensitiveness and feeling for form is a native thing, yet we know that it has been in our own case increased by cultivation, and that with its increase has come added pleasure in our reading of poetry. And finally, our familiarity with a large body of poetry reflecting the characteristics of certain individual men and women, and, to some extent, of the times in which they have lived, gives us a basis of comparison, a stock of conceptions which we are interested to supplement and enrich, to improve and develop, by using the new material we have at hand.

We need not go farther than this in our analysis. But as we look back we may see clearly two ideas that bear on the teaching of poetry. The first is that part of our equipment as readers of poetry does not

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come through study at all—our general maturity, that is, and our natural sensibility or openness to things of art. And the second is, that so far as our feeling for poetry has been cultivated, it has been through experience with it, through familiarity with imaginative modes of expression, with the constructive and musical elements of poetic form, and with the actual achievement in poetic art found in the work of certain great poets.

We draw near to our problem, then, when we ask ourselves how we may help our students to gain these advantages, at the same time protecting their individuality of taste for its healthy, free development.

The negative part of the reply is perhaps the more obvious. We should not single out special poems and ask that they be admired or cared for. Still less should we spend our time pointing out the particular virtues that we ourselves find in a given poem. Least of all should we ask our students to point out and account for the special beauties that appeal to them. It is easy to guess, if we do not know by experience, the quality of sincerity that results from that sort of procedure. And if all this is bad, there is no use in characterizing other methods not unheard of in the annals of literature teaching: paraphrasing involved passages, scanning by mechanical rule, classifying figures of speech, grubbing among notes, memorizing critical opinions, and so on down through the dismal chapter.

It is not all this, but rather the positive part of the reply, that is worth dwelling on. And that, it seems to me, is a single idea capable of flexible, tactful application: give occasion, by a variety of suggested inquiries, for the student to turn the pages of his volume of verse, reading where he may expect to find results, and so, by frequent contact, accustom him to familiar intercourse with a diversified body of poems in which he is likely to find something to care for; direct the comments to objective, tangible matters that can be pointed out, and let appreciation find its own spontaneous expression—or go unexpressed. What these tangible matters shall be, and how they shall be taken up, depends of course on the tact of the teacher; but what he may learn about his own resources of pleasure will perhaps give a practical clue.

The musical qualities of poetry furnish one approach. Can the student recognize, for example, the characteristic swing of iambic verse as opposed to anapestic? He must read certain indicated examples to find out—read them aloud, and catch the musical spirit of them. Can he distinguish between certain ones that call for quickness of tempo and others that should be read more slowly? Can he find examples of lines

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or stanzas where the sound echoes and helps to emphasize the sense? The teacher can show typical examples and direct the student to poems where he can find others for himself. And the result of all these quests, and many others that might be suggested, will be that not only will the student acquire familiarity with a body of poetry, but he will have the satisfaction of bringing tangible results from his reading.

Then there are the ways of imaginative expression to study. Does the student visualize the pictures of a given poem? Does he distinguish between one figure that concentrates a series of associated ideas in the single flash of an image, and another that is sustained through a whole passage with a deliberate symbolic meaning? Does he recognize the lyric significance of the refrain in bringing out the varied accent of a single feeling? Does he observe when a touch of landscape has value as descriptive setting, and when it carries the emotional coloring of a mood? There is a danger here of becoming too subtle, but the tact of the teacher, alive to the responsiveness of the class, will furnish the corrective.

The obvious characteristics of a given poet's work furnish another field of inquiry. What kind of metrical forms is the poet prone to use? What are his characteristic themes? Does he lean toward the extreme of hiding himself behind the objective interest of story and picture, or of revealing the subjective quality of his personal feeling?

In approaching the study of poetry by starting inquiries such as these, there is every opportunity for the teacher to adapt himself to the aptitudes and interests of his class. But however flexible the practice, one idea of principle underlies it all: comparative study, the consideration of one poem in the light of another, or of many others with which the student has become familiar. And more than that, it relieves the teacher from the futility of asking, and the student from the embarrassment of trying to answer, questions regarding the quantity or quality of his "appreciation." Appreciation is of course the final purpose of it all, but the teacher can best show his own as he shows his moral character, indirectly, without unwise talking about it; and the student's appreciation is left free to grow spontaneously, as he gradually finds himself at home in the world of imaginative expression.

S. S. Seward, Jr.

Stanford University

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NEWS AND NOTES

NORTHEASTERN IOWA ASSOCIATION

The English Conference of the Northeastern Iowa Teachers' Association, which met at Waterloo, March 28–30, was well attended, and the papers that were presented aroused lively discussions. Miss Mary A. Eaton, of the Marshalltown High School, read a paper on the subject, "Do the College Entrance Requirements Dominate the English Courses of Iowa High Schools? If So, to What Degree Is Such Domination Beneficial?" The first part of the subject was a question of fact. Replies from forty out of the fifty largest high schools in Iowa showed conclusively that the college-entrance requirements are the basis of the regular course in literature in all of these schools. Some of them depart slightly from the requirements, and some of them do considerably more reading than is suggested in the requirements. The second part of this topic called forth extended discussion, in which there appeared almost as many opinions as there were speakers. Possibly this is the reason why superintendents and principals adopt the college-entrance requirements as a sort of norm; for these requirements are supported by a body of theory and experience that has much "authority."

Mr. S. E. Conybeare, of the Cedar Rapids High School, read an interesting discussion of "The Laboratory Method and Its Application to the Teaching of English Composition." Mr. Conybeare set forth very forcefully his arguments for the necessity of adopting the laboratory method in the teaching of English composition—not the so-called laboratory method that consists in having the pupils write complete original compositions instead of merely correct uniform lists of sentences containing false syntax or faulty rhetoric—but the laboratory method as it is used at present in the sciences, in which there is a double period of time when constructive work is being done. The adoption of such a method would necessitate the employment of twice as many teachers of English composition as are now employed, and would do away almost entirely with the reading of papers after school hours. Professor S. A. Lynch, of the Iowa State Teachers College, who was the leader of the conference, pointed out the fact that even if the laboratory method were adopted for the teaching of original English composition (which is the only kind that counts for much in the high school), the work of the English teacher would still be more difficult than that of the science

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teacher. There are several reasons for this, one of which is the fact that no two compositions are alike. The science teacher gives one experimental problem to twenty pupils and they all work it in approximately the same way. His duty is simply to see that they do the work in the desired way and secure the desired uniform result. In English composition this process is reversed: *the pupils present to the teacher twenty different problems*. Each composition is a new problem for the teacher, and he must do a great deal of quick thinking to solve each problem as it is presented. And these problems differ with each class, while the science teacher gives the same problem to successive classes year after year. Such considerations suggest that, in comparison with the science teacher, the teacher of English composition should have smaller classes and more time for rest and recreation. What is the actual situation in most high schools? Is it not time for teachers of English to study their own situation, to present the facts clearly to supervising officers, and to advocate such readjustment of existing conditions as will make their work more effective?

The *Journal* has received a program of a Shakespearean festival which was held in the Greek Theater of the University of California under the auspices of the English Club of that institution on Saturday, April 13, at 2:30 and 8:15 P.M. Several neighboring high schools participated, each giving a portion of a play. Lowell High School, San Francisco, presented *The Tempest*, part of Act I, scene 2; Act II, scene 2; and Act V (slightly altered). Oakland High School presented Act IV of *The Merchant of Venice*. Berkeley High School presented Act IV of *The Winter's Tale*, to the tune of "Youth's a Stuff Will Not Endure" by the school orchestra. The English Club of the University acted *Henry V*, with certain omissions, under the direction of Mr. Garnet Holme. The occasion is said to have been notable, the acting of the pupils of the high schools being surprisingly good.

Shakespeare's birthday was celebrated by the Drama League of America with a festival in Lincoln Park, Chicago, on April 23. Eighteen hundred children from the schools were trained to present in appropriate costume, by means of pantomime, scenes from *King Henry V*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Julius Caesar*, *As You Like It*, *Hamlet*, *Mid-Summer Night's Dream*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and *The Tempest*. The procession passed near the statue of the poet and deposited garlands, while Professor S. H. Clark, of the University of Chicago, as orator read

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appropriate passages from the plays. Under the guidance of a character representing Shakespeare himself, the pageant then proceeded to an open space, where the players were presented to Queen Elizabeth, King James, and their courts. The pantomimes and dances followed.

The Drama League had the aid of numerous clubs in the city, of members of the faculty of the Teachers College and of the Art Institute, and also of prominent actors and dramatic critics. Mr. E. H. Sothern and Miss Julia Marlowe gave a special matinee performance for the children. Prizes were awarded for the best essays on Shakespearean topics by pupils from the schools and a number of commemorative portraits were hung. The expenses of the festival were met, in part, by the sale of special post cards presenting scenes from Shakespeare's plays and by the sale of the programs. The cards and programs may be had of the Ralph Seymour Company, Art Institute, Chicago—the cards at five cents each, the programs at ten.

As announced in the March number of the *Journal*, the chief speakers before the English section of the Schoolmasters' Club of Michigan at Ann Arbor on March 29 were W. L. Comfort of Detroit, Mrs. A. Starr Best of Chicago, J. F. Hosic of Chicago, and E. M. Hopkins of Lawrence, Kan. Mr. Hopkins reported the results so far obtained by his committee as to the relative cost of English work and the various plans which have been suggested for lightening the burden and increasing the efficiency of composition teaching. He showed that even if the number of pupils to the teacher were reduced in English to the level of the sciences, the pro rata cost would still be much less for the former than for the latter. A summary of his address will be printed in the next number of the *Journal*.

The association adopted resolutions indorsing the work of the committee and urging the authorities, including the Bureau of Education at Washington and the Carnegie Foundation, to assist. The Association also voted to join the National Council of Teachers of English.

The recent educational conference of academies and high schools in co-operation with the University of Chicago was unique. The University had invited the secondary schools to send representatives to visit the college classes, and the conference was devoted to a consideration of the criticisms made by these visitors. Both the departmental meetings and the general meeting were characterized by great good-will, and several valuable suggestions were made. The English Conference voted to recommend: (1) that only the most experienced and efficient

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instructors be placed in charge of Freshman college classes; (2) that the lecture method of instruction be subjected to comparative tests to determine whether it is more valuable than recitation and discussion; (3) that much emphasis be placed upon oral composition; and (4) that the University authorities recommend as teachers of English in high schools only those graduates who have had professional preparation for that work. The effort now being made to bring about conditions conducive to closer personal contact between the younger students in the University and their instructors was warmly commended, and these instructors were urged to visit high-school classes. At the general session it was announced that the interscholastic contest in public speaking at the University will hereafter partake of the spontaneous character of that described by Professor Clapp in the April number of the *English Journal*.

The fiftieth annual convention of the National Education Association will be held in Chicago, July 6 to 12, 1912. There will be two meetings of special interest to teachers of English. On Wednesday, July 10, a regular sesssion of the English Round Table of the Department of Secondary Education will be held. The topic suggested is "Means of Increasing the Efficiency of Instruction in Composition." Papers on "Vocational Themes," "The Laboratory Period," and "Oral Composition" will be read. On the following day a joint conference of English teachers from high schools, normal schools, and colleges will consider the reports of two committees, that on the labor of theme-reading, of which Professor E. M. Hopkins, representing the Modern Language Association and the National Council of Teachers of English, is chairman, and that on articulating school and college, of which Professor J. F. Hosic, representing the English Round Table of the N.E.A. and the National Conference on Uniform Entrance Requirements in English, is chairman. The report on theme-reading will be followed by a discussion of methods of amelioration. The two sessions together should make a valuable contribution to the discussion of composition teaching, now of chief interest in the English field. The program in full will appear in the next number of the *Journal*.

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BOOK NOTICES

[Mention under this head does not preclude review elsewhere.]

Manual of Style. Typographical Rules Governing the Publications of the University of Chicago, with Specimens of Type Used at the University Press. Third Edition. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1911.

Selected Dramas of John Dryden with the "Rehearsal" by George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham. Edited with Introduction and Notes by GEORGE R. NOYES. Chicago: Scott, Foresman & Co., 1910. Pp. 504.

The purpose of the volume is to render Dryden's dramas available for college classes. Great care was exercised to establish a critical text. Contents: "Dryden as a Dramatist;" "Chronological List of Dryden's Dramatic Works;" "*The Conquest of Granada by the Spaniards*, Parts I and II;" "*Marriage à la mode;*" "*All for Love;*" "*The Spanish Friar;*" "*The Rehearsal;*" "Notes." The author is assistant professor of Slavic languages in the University of California.

Writing and Speaking. A Text-book of Rhetoric. By CHARLES SEARS BALDWIN. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1910. Pp. 449.

Composition: Oral and Written. A Text-book for More Advanced Students. By CHARLES SEARS BALDWIN. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1911. Pp. 364.

Composition and Rhetoric. By CHARLES SWAIN THOMAS, WILL DAVID HOWE, and ZELLA O'HAIR. New Edition. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1911. Pp. 509.

Only minor changes have been made. The paging of the new edition seems to correspond with that of the first.

High School Exercises in Grammar. By MAUDE M. FRANK. Second Impression, Revised. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1912. Pp. 198.

A Study of the Paragraph. By HELEN THOMAS. With a Preface by F. P. EMERY. New York: American Book Co., 1912. Pp. 125.

A somewhat elaborate plan of teaching methods of paragraphy development to high-school pupils. The material is largely illustrative.

High-School English. Book One and Book Two. By A. R. BRUBACHER and DOROTHY SNYDER. New York: Charles E. Merrill Co., Book I, 1910; Book II, 1912. $1.00 each.

Among the most practical of the books now available for the study of English in the high school.

Progressive Lessons in English. Book One and Book Two. By SIDNEY G. FIRMAN. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1911.

Intended for use in the elementary schools. Grammar and composition alternate with each other.

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Practical Grammar and Composition. By THOMAS WOOD. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1910. Pp. 244.

Prepared to meet the needs of adults, especially in evening high schools.

Standard. Short Course for Evening Schools. By WILLIAM ESTABROOK CHANCELLOR. New York: American Book Co., 1912. Pp. 260.

A first book for foreigners.

First Lessons in English for Foreigners in Evening Schools. By FREDERICK HOUGHTON. New York: American Book Co., 1911. Pp. 160.

The Boys' Parkman. Selected from the Historical Works of Francis Parkman. Compiled by LOUISE S. HASBROUCK. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1912. Pp. 187.

Selections from Boswell's Life of Johnson. Edited by NATHANIEL HORTON BATCHELDER. New York: Charles E. Merrill Co., 1912.

The selections have been chosen to accompany the study of Macaulay's *Life of Johnson.*

Le Morte Arthur, A Middle English Romance. Edited by SAMUEL B. HEMINGWAY. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1912. Riverside Series. Cloth, $0.40.

Selections from Abraham Lincoln. Edited by ANDREW S. DRAPER. New York: American Book Co., 1911. Gateway Series, $0.35.

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OBSERVATIONS UPON THE TEACHING OF COMPOSITION IN FRENCH LYCÉES

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For a survey of the organized and formal instruction in French composition provided under the French educational system, the investigator must direct his attention primarily to the relevant courses in the French *lycée*. Although the French student continues to receive vigorous incidental guidance in writing in connection with courses in literature throughout his academic career —even up to the last syllable of his oral examination for the *doctorat*[1] —nevertheless the French universities, in general, offer no courses devoted exclusively to composition. To the European, indeed, the presence of such secondary-school courses in our American universities and colleges seems anomalous.[2]

In the following few pages, then, I offer a brief account of a modest inquiry of my own into the methods used in French *lycées* for teaching composition in the mother-tongue. This account is inspired, especially, by personal observation and contact, for during a sojourn in Paris last autumn, I had opportunities both for visiting *lycée* classrooms, and for talking privately with teachers. By the teachers themselves, moreover, I was introduced to the official doctrine concerning composition as formulated by the French

[1] In attending an examination for the French *doctorat* the American Doctor of Philosophy is astonished at the proportion of attention given to the literary form of the *thèse*, or *thèses*.

[2] See, for example, P. J. Hartog, *The Writing of English*, Oxford, 1908, p. 104.

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government, and was in this way enabled to draw inferences considerably beyond the range of my own observation. I propose, then, first a brief statement of the *lycée* curriculum, together with certain official interpretations, secondly an account of typical experiences in the classroom, and thirdly a few of the reflections that inevitably occur to a foreign visitor.

I

Excluding the preparatory and elementary divisions, the *lycée* course proper comprises the studies of seven years, as follows:[1]

1. Classe de Sixième (pupil's age about twelve years)
2. Classe de Cinquième (pupil's age about thirteen years)
3. Classe de Quatrième (pupil's age about fourteen years)
4. Classe de Troisième (pupil's age about fifteen years)
5. Classe de Deuxième (pupil's age about sixteen years)
6. Classe de Première (pupil's age about seventeen years)
7. Classe de Philosophie (pupil's age about eighteen years)

Without examining the numerous intricacies within this curriculum of seven years, we may seek a general statement as to the place allotted to the study of French. Although our chief interest, for the moment, is the subject of composition, our discussion of this matter would be incomplete, or even unintelligible, without a recognition of the fact that throughout the *lycée* course literature, grammar, and composition are taught as one subject. The curriculum of the average pupil in this broader subject may be outlined in the following general terms:

CLASSE DE SIXIÈME (French 3 hours out of 23 a week).

Literature: Reading, explanation, and recitation (from memory) of French authors.

Texts are chosen from the following: selected pieces of classical French prose and verse, modern French versions of mediaeval tales, La Fontaine, Fénelon, Buffon, selections from nineteenth-century poets.

Language: Study of syntax, exercises in the French language and orthography.

Composition: Short oral exercises, and short written compositions.

[1] An admirable report on the system of secondary and university education in France, together with special studies of particular aspects of the system, has been published by the English Board of Education, in *Special Reports on Educational Subjects*, Vol. XXIV. London: Wyman & Sons, 109 Fetter Lane, E.C., 1911. Pp. xii+554. 3s.

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CLASSE DE CINQUIÈME (French 3 hours out of 23 a week).

Literature: Reading, explanation, and recitation of French authors. Texts are chosen from the following: modern French versions of tales from mediaeval poets and prose-writers, scenes from Corneille and Molière, Racine's *Esther*, La Fontaine's *Fables* (first six books), Fénelon's *Télémaque*, selected descriptions from Buffon, prose narrations from authors of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, selected poets of the nineteenth century.

Language: Study of syntax, exercises in the French language and orthography.

Composition: Simple oral and written compositions.

CLASSE DE QUATRIÈME (French 3 hours out of 22 a week).

Literature: Reading, explanation, and recitation of French authors. Texts are chosen from the following: selected scenes from Corneille and Molière, Racine's *Athalie*, La Fontaine's *Fables* (last six books), Boileau's *Le Lutrin*, selected dialogues and fables from Fénelon, Voltaire's *Charles XII* and *Siècle de Louis XIV*, portraits and stories from mémoires of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, extracts from Chateaubriand and Michelet. Additional assignments for home reading, to be controlled by work in class.

Language: Review of French grammar. Exercises in the French language and orthography.

Composition: Simple oral and written compositions. Exercises in versification, in connection with the reading of poetry in class.

CLASSE DE TROISIÈME (French 3 hours out of 23 a week).

Literature: Reading, explanation, and recitation of French authors. Texts are chosen from the following: selected plays of Corneille, Molière, and Racine, selected letters of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, selections from Boileau, Làmartine, Victor Hugo, Chateaubriand, and Michelet. Additional assignments for home reading. At this point a short history of French literature is put into the hands of the pupil.

Language: Incidental instruction in historical grammar.

Composition: Longer compositions.

CLASSE DE SECONDE (French 3 hours out of 23 a week).

Literature: Explanation and recitation of French authors. Texts are chosen from the following: a long list including extracts from mediaeval literature, selected plays of Corneille, Molière, and Racine, selected letters of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, extracts from mémoires and correspondence bearing upon seventeenth-

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century society, selections from Rousseau. Additional assignments for home reading. History of French literature from the beginning to the end of the sixteenth century.

Language: Study of an advanced textbook on grammar.

Composition: Longer compositions.

CLASSE DE PREMIÈRE (French 3 hours out of 24 a week).

Literature: Explanation and recitation of French authors.

Texts are chosen from the following: a long list including selected plays of Corneille, Molière, and Racine, Pascal's *Pensées*, extracts from Montesquieu, Buffon, Voltaire, and Diderot, extracts from mémoires and correspondence bearing upon eighteenth-century society. Additional assignments for home reading. History of French literature from the seventeenth century to the middle of the nineteenth century.

Composition: Longer compositions.

CLASSE DE PHILOSOPHIE.

No direct study of French composition and literature.

The general principles underlying this curriculum in French, and incisive suggestions as to the practical application of it, are generously given in several official documents, notably in the ministerial *Instructions* of 1909, from which I offer pertinent excerpts.

The importance attached to the explanation of literary texts, and the part occupied by this exercise in the teaching of composition, are indicated in the following passage:[1]

If there is one characteristic feature of the reforms of 1902 with regard to the teaching of French, it is that reading with explanation, which was previously too much subordinated to literary history, has passed from the second place to the first, and by means of the increased precision of its methods has become more and more an instrument of intellectual and moral education. If well conducted, it is an exercise in logic and an exercise in composition, since it points out and makes the pupils discover the consecutive order of the ideas in a given piece and the relationships between them; it is an exercise in clearness of thought, since the exact meaning of the essential words and their relation to the ideas which they express must be defined; an exercise to some extent in style, since, more especially in the case of the pupils of the *classe de lettres*,[2] it

[1] *Special Reports*, Vol. XXIV, pp. 155–56, dealing with the work of the *Classe de Seconde* and the *Classe de Première*.

[2] The classes in French, Latin, and Greek in the *Classe de Seconde* and *Classe de Première* are termed *classes de lettres*.

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may inspire a feeling for felicities of literary form; and finally, since such felicities do not consist in form alone, it is an exercise of which the educational value cannot be overestimated.

But if no exercise is more important than this, none is more difficult, and there is none which is conceived of in ways more different and at times more contradictory. This peculiar difficulty arises mainly from two causes. The explanation of texts in the classical language rests on its own particular traditions, while such traditions are wanting in the case of the explanation of French texts, at any rate, to the methodical and thorough kind of explanation to be understood here. And then, since an explanation of this kind must vary with circumstances, with the author studied, with the works, or portions of works, of one and the same author, with the different points of view from which such works are judged by different minds, the explanation cannot be made to follow absolute rules. Hence, the *Instructions* are limited to the observation that all possible guidance with regard to the method of planning out an explanation seems to be implied in the two injunctions "to select" and "to define" (*choisir et préciser*); to select a text of interest, of reasonable length and yet nevertheless forming a complete piece in itself (*un tout*); and from this piece, passing over the less characteristic details, to select a series of observations co-ordinated naturally and with a common object in view; to define, that is to say, to perceive the difficulties, to make them apparent to the class, and after discussing, to solve them; to avoid digressions which would lead the class to forget the text, to avoid wearisome paraphrase and pseudo-systematic divisions which are out of relation with the real subject-matter and turn the living page into a sterile piece of anatomy.

In connection with this careful reading texts in class one should mention also the assignments of passages to be memorized, and the assignments of books for home reading. Concerning the assignments for memorizing, the *Instructions* speak vigorously:[1]

It is necessary to attach more importance [than at present] to the recitation of lessons. If formerly too much importance was attached to the memory, it is at present too much neglected, and it now seems to have become deficient in the case of too many pupils. Lessons to be learnt by heart are often ill known or badly recited. Again, they are often too much subdivided. It is right that a text to be learnt by heart should be sufficiently short not to overwhelm the pupil, but it should be long enough to impose on him the useful discipline of an effort (*la gêne utile*). The recitation lesson should be given twice a week. . . . . Ten minutes or at most a quarter of an hour should be devoted to it.

[1] *Op. cit.*, Vol. XXIV, p. 153, dealing with the work of the *Classe de Seconde* and the *Classe de Première*.

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The memory will be most efficaciously developed and kept active by intelligent and methodical exercises. The ease with which the text to be learnt by heart will be retained will depend on the thoroughness with which the previous explanation has been given and on the continuity of this explanation. Too many masters divide up the piece into small portions, and deal with only a given portion after the preceding portion has been recited. It is better, first of all, to explain the whole piece in full detail, and then to divide it into portions to be learnt by heart successively, and when the time comes for each to be recited, to ask only such questions with regard to it as are necessary to make sure that the explanation has not been forgotten. Indeed, the recitation lesson will gain in variety and in interest by the introduction of well-chosen questions on the matter or the form of the text cited, provided that the recitation itself is not too frequently interrupted.

Intelligent diction is a matter of even greater necessity in these than in the lower classes. Nevertheless, the question arises how it comes about that many boys, although they understand what they recite, seem to wish it to appear as if they did not. This false shame should be combated, and the master must not be discouraged by the failure of the first attempt in this direction. A low mark should be assigned to any recitation given indistinctly or monotonously, even if the text is accurately known by heart.

As to home reading the *Instructions* give the following advice:[1]

The pupils should be advised to devote their spare time on Thursdays[2] and Sundays to reading for themselves, either in the preparation room or at home. The masters can do a great deal to stimulate the desire for knowledge (*la curiosité intellectuelle*), either by suggesting exactly the reading necessary or useful for the preparation of a composition, marking a special page or a passage; or else by encouraging the pupils to read without any other guidance than a list, as varied and as extensive as possible, of books suited to the age and intelligence of the young readers, from which they may choose freely, with no other thought than of their own pleasure. The essential thing is to give them a taste for reading. It is good to question the pupils from time to time on the books that they have read spontaneously in this way, to ask them to give a short viva voce account of them impromptu, and thus to show that the master is interested, and that he takes notice of all intellectual effort, even if it be not made as a direct preparation for the work of the class. This kind of unconstrained conversation, directed with skill, stimulates the mental activity of the pupils, and gives an excellent opportunity for advice in season, which will be all the better received when given as simply as possible.

The general notion of method underlying the constant study of grammar is indicated as follows:[3]

[1] *Special Reports*, Vol. XXIV, pp. 141–42. [2] The weekly vacation.

[3] *Op. cit.*, Vol. XXIV, pp. 147–48.

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French is a living language which is known insufficiently if it has been learned merely by usage; the study of grammar is therefore a necessity. But grammar is to be used not only to teach the pupils to read and write correctly on the one hand, and on the other hand to guide them to a better understanding of living and dead writers, but also to form their judgment, a fact which must be remembered in the enunciation as well as in the application of grammatical rules.

With regard to method, attention is to be paid to the following instructions:

1. The rule is never to be separated from the example, the formula from its application. The teacher is to begin by quoting examples in order to prepare the way for the rule, and when the rule has been first understood and then repeated, he is to point out examples which confirm it, so that he starts from examples and ends with examples.

2. The teaching of grammar throughout all the classes should be kept extremely simple. By simplicity here is meant real simplicity and not an excessive conciseness resulting in abstract formulae which the children cannot understand. The difficulties created by grammarians are to be ignored, and only those arising from usage and the historical development of the language, and requiring explanation, are to be dealt with.

3. The attention of the teachers of the *Classe de Sixième* is especially directed to the necessity for recapitulation. Since the pupils of this class are recruited from various sources, it is important that before beginning the study of the syllabus special to the class, the teacher should make sure that his pupils are acquainted with the syllabus of the *Classe de Septième* and in particular that they know the grammatical forms. This methodical revision is to be carried out not by means of formal lessons, but by means of oral exercises. . . . .

4. Finally, without going into detail, a reminder is here given that the pupils must never be required to learn a rule which has not been previously explained to them, and that the explanation of a rule, or of a series of rules, should not take up a whole lesson. Half an hour's teaching of grammar seems to be the maximum for a child's endurance.

Passing on to a consideration of the direct teaching of composition, we encounter definite directions as to (1) the graduation of the work, (2) the method of assignment, (3) the correction of themes, and (4) oral composition. Concerning the adjustment of the work to the progress of the pupil, the *Instructions* speak as follows:[1]

The general idea governing the selection of subjects for written work in French in the various classes is that as the boy becomes adolescent he should not be treated too soon as a grown-up man, nor induced to have a misplaced confidence in his own powers, by being asked to make premature intellectual efforts. If this point of view is accepted, there will be no exercises set in pure

[1] *Op. cit.*, Vol. XXIV, p. 154, dealing with the work of the *Classe de Seconde* and the *Classe de Première*.

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"invention," in which the pupil is required to derive his entire composition from his own intellectual resources, still so little developed; and no essays set on ambitious subjects that demand a certain maturity of critical sense and of literary style, essays which can yield no solid result and which are not without danger to the pupil.

The literary studies of the university student and the free fancy of the writer, pursued at their own risks, are one thing, the written composition in secondary schools is another. The latter should be always more or less prepared with the help of the master and directed by him, and always in close relationship and co-ordination with the teaching given and received in a particular year, just as such teaching is made to depend on the teaching of the previous years. It is a prolongation, a verification, and a corollary of the oral teaching, the explanations, and the readings, in the classroom. The teacher must be on his guard against subjects of too original a kind (*il faut se défier des sujets inattendus*). . . . .

As in the lower classes, the subjects set for French composition must lie within the range of the experience or knowledge acquired by the pupils. The exercise to be performed is to be previously prepared by the master with the pupils, more or less completely. The subject-matter is to be examined, its special interest and opportunities are to be indicated, and an appeal made to the pupils' powers of reflection. The following are examples of suitable exercises in composition for the *Classe de Quatrième* and the *Classe de Troisième:* very simple stories dealing (1) with historical or legendary subjects (taken from the syllabus for the class or from epochs previously studied); (2) with moral subjects, in which the pupil is to make use of what he has read and in which the exercise is to be brought into relation with the class in moral instruction; (3) with familiar and picturesque topics. Little sketches of everyday life, or descriptions, may also be given; and in all cases the pupil must have recourse to his own direct observation or, at any rate, base his work on real things within his knowledge. The subject may from time to time be treated in the form of a familiar letter.

Even in the *Classe de Troisième* exercises of pure invention, and critical discussions are out of place. Simple exercises in composition are to be preferred, such as summarizing of a short but complete piece, and practical exercises in correction at the blackboard, of which the chief object is to teach the pupil the method to be followed, first, in working out a composition, and secondly, in correcting it himself.

Exercises in versification in the *Classe de Quatrième* and the *Classe de Troisième* should be mainly oral, and given, as opportunity arises, during the reading of texts. If written exercises relating to this subject are not absolutely prohibited, it is recommended that extremely moderate use should be made of them.[1]

[1] *Special Reports*, Vol. XXIV, p. 152, dealing with the work of the *Classe de Quatrième* and the *Classe de Troisième*.

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The judicious outlining of assigned subjects is definitely prescribed in the following paragraph:[1]

It is useful, if not always necessary, to give out a detailed subject (*matière*) for composition, and there are but few exercises in which it can be omitted without serious drawbacks. While greater or less detail should be given according to the nature of the subject and the age of the class, the fact of giving a detailed subject imposes a useful discipline on the minds of the pupils. They are taught to confine themselves within well-marked limits, to put their ideas into order, and to follow out a reasoning to its logical conclusion, before they venture on thinking and writing for themselves. What is here contemplated is obviously not subject-matter chosen at haphazard and borrowed ready made by the master without careful investigation, but a subject that is either original or one that he has made his own personal study, and that is the more likely, on account of the collaboration between master and pupils, to yield good results. The affair is, of course, as the master will perceive, one of degree. A subject-matter that is given in too great detail and leaves the pupil nothing to discover for himself may deprive him of all intellectual impetus and condemn him to a mere task of amplification. The faculty of distinguishing in a given subject the idea that is essential, from out of which the various parts of the composition must grow, is of course, the work of a mature mind, and we can scarcely ask school boys, of whom the oldest are very young, to attempt it without some preparatory hints, or without some sort of help. But under the prudent direction of a teacher who knows how to free the pupils gradually from his own guidance, they will learn to discover little by little for themselves what they have previously been taught to observe and to appreciate in the models that they try to emulate. Thus, as the pupils advance in the *classes de lettres*, the assistance given to them in setting a composition should gradually take less and less the form of a complete plan and more and more that of simple directions (*orientation*), so that as their powers develop they should not be denied all share of personal initiative in the work of composition.

The expectations of the government as to the correcting of themes are expressed as follows:[2]

The written corrections of compositions must precede and serve as a preparation for the oral correction, which is the essential form of correction, and to which in the *classes de lettres* at least three-quarters of an hour must be devoted.[3] Apart from the importance attached by the parents of the pupils to written corrections, they are useful in showing the pupil how he is getting

[1] *Op. cit.*, Vol. XXIV, p. 154, dealing with the work of the *Classe de Seconde* and the *Classe de Première*.

[2] *Op. cit.*, Vol. XXIV, p. 155.

[3] Three-quarters of an hour, that is, must be devoted to the collective oral correction of the one substantial weekly theme (*devoir*).

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on, and what are still his weak points. It is therefore to be desired that the work of each pupil should be read through, even if not corrected in detail. It is indeed found that corrections in minute detail do not always produce the expected effect on the pupils. The actual form of correction of the exercises will differ with the size of the class and with the master. What is essential is that the pupils should be aware that their exercises will in any case be read through, and that they should thus be kept up to the mark. It is also essential that their attention should not be wearied in class by a monotonous procession of exercises, commented on one after the other.

The oral correction gives life to the written correction and saves it from being sterile. It is therefore an absolute rule that the compositions should never be corrected in class immediately after they have been given in, for it is impossible to criticize them effectively unless they have been read through beforehand, and still more impossible to compare them so as to extract from them those observations by which the class as a whole can alone profit, in other words, to co-ordinate the elements of the collective correction. This kind of correction does not in any way exclude the correction of an individual composition when it may give rise to some opportune or characteristic criticism. . . . . When the master has extracted from the separate exercises and grouped together the ideas, and the good and bad passages of which the explanation and discussion may be useful to the class as a whole, the most important elements in the correction of the separate exercises will become an integral part of the collective correction, that which deals, as the *Instructions* say, "not with a few secondary details, but with the general idea of composition, considered as a logical whole, with its vital characteristics. Moreover," the *Instructions* continue, "the master will not merely criticize what has been actually written, but will try to show also what ought to have been done." In other words, the interest and utility of the collective correction lies in this, that the master reconstructs the composition in collaboration with his pupils out of material not derived exclusively either from his own preconceived notion of what the composition ought to be, or from the data taken from the different exercises sent in by the class, but from the best elements common to these data and to his own conception; so that the result of the lesson in composition is a reasoned construction, and a model of its kind, of which the impression will remain in the minds of the pupils.

Of at least one masterly application of this important principle of collective correction I shall give an account below.

The following brief exhortation as to oral composition gives merely a slight indication of what is, as a matter of fact, an extensive practice:[1]

As it is important that the pupil should be exercised in speaking as well as in writing, these exercises are to be both oral and written. Among oral

[1] *Special Reports*, Vol. XXIV, p. 150.

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exercises may be instanced short stories which the pupils have had told to them, descriptions of pictures, descriptions of things the pupils have seen, such as buildings, landscapes, scenes of family or school life and of everyday life.

Since I derived much information and enlightenment from that storehouse of experience, the *lycée* classbook (*cahier de textes*), I cannot forbear recognizing here, finally, the following sensible prescription of the government:[1]

There should be in each class a class notebook in which all the subjects of the written exercises should be written out carefully with the date of each. This notebook serves not only as an indispensable book of reference for the pupils to verify the accuracy of the text taken down, but also as an index of the progress of the class and of the work accomplished, and on this ground it is of particular interest to the teachers themselves. Moreover, the masters of the next class above, which the pupils enter in October, by looking through the class notebook of the class they have just left, will avoid loss of time.

II

From official instructions so complete and so detailed as those from which I have quoted above, and from American preconceptions as to French love of system and orderliness, one might naturally enough infer that the teacher of composition in a French secondary school is intolerably hampered by prescription, inspection, and supervision. My conversations with the teachers themselves, however, revealed to me the absence of any such feeling among them. It appears that the teachers regard the official *Instructions* with great respect as a sane and humane document, as a useful guide, and as a repository for genuinely practical suggestions. This document is, indeed, a mere formulation of methods of which the efficacy had been proved through a long tradition of practical teaching. Naturally, then, the French teachers feel no repression under a system which they rightly regard as their own creation, and which, as a matter of fact, necessarily leaves to the teacher's originality the greater part of the technique of the classroom.

The pedagogical freedom and enthusiasm possible under this official system I had ample opportunity of observing in more than one classroom, and of two or three of these visits I offer a somewhat detailed account.

[1] *Op. cit.*, Vol. XXIV, p. 141.

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I may begin with a recitation in the *Classe de Troisième* under Monsieur X, in the Lycée Louis le Grand. The thirty-six boys, fifteen years of age, had already scrambled to their places in the dingy recitation room when, accompanied by a porter carrying a chair, I was ushered into the room in somewhat formal fashion. After the pupils had paid their respects by rising to their feet, and after the teacher had received me cordially, I took my seat before the class beside the teacher's desk.

The hour was to be devoted to the criticism of a substantial weekly theme (*devoir*) of some 300 to 500 words upon the subject "Un Dialogue entre Monsieur Tant-Pis et Monsieur Tant-Mieux." The optimist and pessimist of the title were, it appeared, to be actual school boys. At the outset, one of the pupils passed about the corrected themes to their authors, in each case calling aloud the name of the writer and the numerical mark upon his theme. Meanwhile the teacher recorded the marks in his classbook, mumbling facetious observations that transformed the tension of those critical moments into a spell of good feeling.

Since he had previously corrected the themes carefully, and had given them an additional survey shortly before the recitation hour, the teacher remembered how nearly every one of his thirty-six pupils had treated the subject, could play upon his class as upon an orchestra, could call upon individuals to read aloud certain parts of their themes for public approval or condemnation, could dart hither and thither sly, significant glances. He began his general criticism by pointing out a prevailing tendency of the class toward colloquialism and slang. Although he justly attributed the fault partly to the nature of the subject itself—a dialogue between school boys—he finally roused himself to good-natured impatience, shouting to me, "Would a pupil of yours dare to litter his theme with such incredible slang as *fiche moi la peine* or *sans blague?*" I was obliged to reply that such misdemeanors are not unknown in America.

Monsieur X then discussed the chief difficulty of the task, which he conceived to lie in the fact that the subject itself suggested no definite beginning or end. He launched into good-natured ridicule of certain beginnings by such remarks as these: "Why

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obtrude yourself into the opening? Why delay the beginning of the dialogue itself? What could be duller than Monsieur A's opening sentence, 'As I was on my way to school, I overheard my comrades Tant-Pis and Tant-Mieux in conversation concerning the weather'? Am I not right, Monsieur A? Monsieur D was far wiser in beginning promptly with the words,'"What vile weather!" said Tant-Mieux, as he picked up his notebook from the sloppy pavement.' I beg you to begin with the thing itself. Let's have none of these perfunctory, egotistical introductions."

From the matter of beginnings the teacher passed on to the main ideas. Here he was, of course, far less dogmatic. He suggested that something must be done to give an atmosphere or tone—the whole dialogue must be dominated by some prevailing point of view or mood. He suggested incidents such as those arising out of meetings with other boys on a walk, or out of accidents on the street; he hinted at more grave and intimate conversation about the pleasures or hardships of life at home.

As to the endings of the dialogues Monsieur X was particularly severe. He deprecated the absence of a definite goal, and the tendency to great length. "Why not arrive, eventually, at some particular place? Why go on forever? Monsieur G, I thought your theme would never end. You had nothing definite to say, and you went on saying it *sans fin*. Stop at the door of the school, or, better still, stop with a bit of good repartee."

During the latter part of the hour the teacher read aloud two themes, giving the names of the writers, and summoned one lad to read aloud his own production. In each case Monsieur X summed up the achievement of the pupil in terms of remarks already made as to the ideal beginning, middle, and end. One of the themes he pronounced "pas mal"—high praise in a French *lycée*.

Waiving all consideration of this teacher's priceless good-nature, vivacity, and humane intelligence, we find the chief virtue of his procedure, I suppose, in the fact that in spite of his brusque treatment of details, he accomplished a definite and constructive general result. Since all the pupils had spent themselves upon the same definite task, each pupil felt the personal application of all that was said. The pupils—and the visitor—left the room with definite and

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cheering ideas upon the problems involved in writing a dialogue, and with at least one useful model indelibly printed upon their minds. Far from hampered by official restrictions, Monsieur X had given life to the very words of the *Instructions*, which I venture to repeat:

> The interest and utility of the collective correction lies in this, that the master reconstructs the composition in collaboration with his pupils out of material not derived exclusively either from his own preconceived notion of what the composition ought to be, or from the data taken from the different exercises sent in by the class, but from the best elements common to these data and to his own conception; so that the result of the lesson in composition is a reasoned construction, and a model in its kind, of which the impression will remain in the minds of the pupils.

In observing this doctrine Monsieur X displayed his humanity, his enthusiasm, his maturity, and his art.

With the living results of Monsieur X's classroom fresh in mind, I was cordially received by Monsieur Y, late one afternoon, before his *Classe de Première* in the Lycée Henri IV. After the forty pupils, seventeen or eighteen years of age, had expressed their formal greeting by rising momentarily, the teacher settled himself, with apparent satisfaction, for displaying the accomplishments of what, as he had previously told me, he considered a remarkable class.

The recitation began with the most characteristic of all French class exercises, an *explication de texte;* that is, first the ardent examination of the language and thought of a particular passage of literature, and secondly a generalization from the particular passage to the author's work as a whole. The passage was an extract from Pascal's *Pensées*. A boy was called upon to recite the opening paragraph, assigned for memorizing. When the lad broke down in the middle of what had promised to be a model recitation, his merciful teacher provided him a graceful retreat by remarking to the visitor, "Mauvais garçon, n'est-ce pas, Monsieur?" to the merriment of us all. The textual explanations themselves were careful and searching, and the generalizations were skilfully and sincerely made. The pupils were alert and seemed to be on terms of genuine familiarity with literature. Although they

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displayed a dangerous facility in the cant of literary criticism, they showed also a considerable amount of real knowledge and true feeling.

After a quarter of an hour spent in *explication de texte*, the teacher proceeded to reports by pupils from their home reading. One recited a poem of De Musset, and one some stanzas of De Vigny. Two boys delighted us by reciting in dialogue a scene from Rotrou's *Sosie*.

From these enlivening exercises we shifted our attention, during the latter part of the hour, to a discussion of the weekly themes, which lay corrected upon the instructor's desk. The ambitious subject was "L'Avare de Molière n'est pas triste." The teacher had evidently not shared the fears of the French government lest the pupils become "critics before their time." In any case he need not have been surprised that the themes were of books bookish. He proceeded valiantly, however, to point out to the class what they ought to have done, and developed a live and logical outline, which, had it been provided in advance, would have insured a considerable number of good themes, even upon so unpromising a subject. The pupils must have left the room much stimulated by a vivacious and suggestive lecture, and eager to try the same subject again—a repetition for which, I inferred, no opportunity was to be given.

Since the themes were not returned to the class at the end of the hour, Monsieur Y generously allowed me to examine his corrections. At the head of each theme I found a substantial paragraph in red ink in which the teacher vigorously pointed out the general defects and merits of the exercise. These general criticisms were, as a whole, constructive and helpful. In the margins, moreover, were written numerous suggestions as to diction—the words *plat*, *laid*, and the like. Surprised, however, at the absence of corrections in grammar, I innocently inquired concerning this omission. To my inquiry Monsieur Y replied, with composure, "Nos élèves de *Première* ne font pas de fautes de grammaire." As a teacher of Freshman English in an American college, I could not conceal my astonishment at this complacent and millennial observation.

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My dullest experience in a French classroom I owe to Monsieur Z, who imprisoned his forty pupils of the *Classe de Première* for an hour's discourse concerning their weekly themes based upon a passage of Quintilian. The task, assigned as a logical analysis and paraphrase of the classical passage, might, under a more humane instructor, have resulted in a fine intellectual discipline and in a living application. In Monsieur Z's hands, however, the recitation was degraded into a logical torturing of the Latin passage, accompanied by a university lecture on the evolution of literary criticism.

III

From a survey of the French system of teaching composition, from observations in the classroom, and from talks with teachers, one is tempted, even at the risk of repetition, to emphasize certain conclusions.

1. The attention of the visitor is called constantly to the close alliance of composition and literature. The conspicuous pride of the French boy in his own manner of writing is due in large measure to his constant, respectful, and pleasurable study of French classics. Throughout his course in the *lycée* he continues in what appears to be a cheerful critical analysis of French classical style and a genuine adoption of many of these critical results into his own writing. Although we may despair of engendering in our American youth the equivalent of this respect for French style, it appears, nevertheless, to many of us that our pupils in English composition need the stimulating ideal provided by a critical reading of our best English prose. To be sure, a prevailing defect in our high-school work in composition is the all-too-apparent dominance of literature, a dominance due largely, perhaps, to the comparative ease and economy of instruction in literature, and to the fact not only that our teachers are often ill equipped for humane instruction in composition and for rapid and effective theme-correction, but also that they are denied an opportunity for such teaching by the size and number of their classes. Could we depend upon having one substantial weekly theme vivaciously assigned and vigorously corrected, first out of class and later before the assembled pupils, we need have no fear of the dominance of literature. The reason

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why college inspectors of high schools inveigh against undue emphasis upon literature is not that the pupils need less literature, but that they need more composition. The inspector deplores not the analysis of masterly prose, but the failure to inject some of the more obvious virtues of the masterpieces into the pupils' own shoddy writing. After having failed repeatedly in his Freshman themes, a student of mine once told me that his previous training in composition had consisted in an analysis of considerable selections from the prose of Cardinal Newman, unaccompanied by any writing of themes. The final exhortation of his teacher had been, "Should you ever have occasion to write, imitate Cardinal Newman." Naturally enough the style of this boy's Freshman themes in no way suggested that of his famous model.

2. Another striking phenomenon of the *lycée* instruction in composition is the prevailing emphasis upon the organization of ideas. However great the attention given to sentence structure and diction, and to the value of ideas in themselves, the chief emphasis, I was led to believe, is placed upon general arrangement. Even in his earliest narrative and descriptive efforts the pupil is taught to follow some sort of outline that he can rationally defend. In encouraging this procedure upon the part of the pupil, the teacher commonly makes use of the *matière*, or outline, to which, as I have shown above, the *Instructions* of 1909 give considerable attention. This outline is not a fussy, formal array of numerous subheadings, but a live analysis of main ideas, arranged in a sensible, logical order. An application of the *matière* much in favor is made as follows: Upon the blackboard, in the presence of the class, the teacher develops an outline of a supposedly original description or narration, to be worked out by the pupil at home. When the pupil returns to class with his theme, he is confronted with the passage from some well-known author upon which the teacher had formed the original outline. The pupil finds himself, then, in unexpected competition with a masterpiece, and is in the best situation possible for observing and applying some of the superior literary virtues of his inspiring rival. This sort of stimulus, I was told, is particularly grateful and profitable to French youth.

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3. As to the subjects assigned for themes in the French *lycées* the American visitor is liable to surprise. At any rate, from my own previous reading and from random conversations I had inferred that the French curriculum encouraged highly literary and ambitious subjects, somewhat remote from simple, actual life. My attention had not yet been called to the relevant pronouncements of the official *Instructions*. Thanks to the French habit of keeping class notebooks, I am able to give the following typical list from a teacher's *cahier de textes* prepared during the year 1910–11 for a *Classe de Quatrième:*

1. Recount in the form of a letter or a narration your experiences during the day of vacation of which you remember most.
2. Recount the story of the child who chased flies. (A careful *matière* was provided for this theme.)
3. The country mouse recounts his adventure with the city mouse.
4. A day of vacation forfeited. Recount after the manner of the fable *Terrette et le pot de lait.*
5. Express your regret over the loss of a pet animal.
6. Compare two passages from La Fontaine, expressing your preference.

One must admit that this list offers not only a gratifying variety, but also a generous amount of human interest. Although it is true that a certain number of teachers seem still to favor literary and moral topics, the general tendency is toward subjects from actual life. One teacher, however, gave me the surprising testimony that in his efforts to introduce live subjects, he encountered the opposition of parents, who, as he averred, often prefer to have their children write about more portentous ideas.

4. Of the enthusiasm and art displayed by French teachers in the classroom one can scarcely speak too highly. A visitor accustomed to the commendable orderliness of our American high schools is hardly prepared for the freedom and informality of the French classroom. The teacher usually seemed to me to be a veritable comrade among comrades. Mild restlessness and disorder were all forgotten in the general vivacity of the room and in the vigorous pursuit of live results. The recitations of the pupils seemed to me surprisingly full, sincere, and well considered. My impression was that oral composition was in constant operation,

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for each pupil seemed to be eager not only to speak, but also to express himself in good form. The striking alertness of the class during the hour devoted to the collective correction of themes was due, I believe, in large measure to the fact that, since all the pupils had written upon the same subject, all were alive to the same general criticisms. Of the art displayed by the best teachers in this collective exercise I have already mentioned an inspiring instance.

In the brief account given above, the American teacher will, of course, find nothing conspicuously new or original. In devices for teaching composition our own country has been, for a decade or two, uncommonly prolific, and it seems quite unnecessary for us to look abroad for further information as to what to do in the classroom. What one misses in American teaching of the subject, after a sojourn in France, is not knowledge, but *real motive*, the real motive inherent in a national pride in refined and effective native prose. The superior results achieved by the French in their teaching of composition are due, not to their wits, but to their devotion; not to their organization, but to their tradition.

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ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON DARKENING COUNSEL

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I

In one of the most charming of all his personal essays—on "A College Magazine"—Robert Louis Stevenson outlines what is ordinarily called, in the oil-tainted slang of the composition class, the "sedulous ape" theory of learning to write. Plainly and clearly and with just enough detail, he tells us how he did it.

Whenever I read a book or a passage that particularly pleased me, in which a thing was said or an effect rendered with propriety, in which there was either some conspicuous force or some happy distinction in the style, I must sit down at once and set myself to ape that quality. I was unsuccessful, and I knew it; and tried again, and was again unsuccessful and always unsuccessful; but at least in these vain bouts, I got some practice in rhythm, in harmony, in construction and the co-ordination of parts. I have thus played the sedulous ape to Hazlitt, to Lamb, to Wordsworth, to Sir Thomas Browne, to Defoe, to Hawthorne, to Montaigne, to Baudelaire and to Obermann. I remember one of these monkey tricks, which was called *The Vanity of Morals:* it was to have had a second part, *The Vanity of Knowledge;* and as I had neither morality nor scholarship, the names were apt; but the second part was never attempted, and the first part was written (which is my reason for recalling it, ghostlike, from its ashes) no less than three times: first in the manner of Hazlitt, second in the manner of Ruskin, who had cast on me a passing spell, and third, in a laborious pasticcio of Sir Thomas Browne. So with my other works: *Cain*, an epic, was (save the mark!) an imitation of *Sordello; Robin Hood*, a tale in verse, took an eclectic middle course among the fields of Keats, Chaucer, and Morris: in *Monmouth*, a tragedy, I reclined on the bosom of Mr. Swinburne; in my innumerable gouty-footed lyrics, I followed many masters; in the first draft of *The King's Pardon*, a tragedy, I was on the trail of no lesser man than John Webster; in the second draft of the same piece, with staggering versatility, I had shifted my allegiance to Congreve, and of course conceived my fable in a less serious vein—for it was not Congreve's verse, it was his exquisite prose, that I admired and sought to copy. Even at the age of thirteen I had tried to do justice to the inhabitants of the famous city of Peebles in the style of the *Book of Snobs*. So I might go on forever, through all my abortive novels, and down to my later plays, of which I think more tenderly, for they were not only conceived at first under the bracing influence of old Dumas, but have met

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with resurrections: one, strangely bettered by another hand, came on the stage itself and was played by bodily actors; the other, originally known as *Semiramis: A Tragedy*, I have observed on bookstalls under the *alias* of *Prince Otto*. But enough has been said to show by what arts of impersonation, and in what purely ventriloquial efforts I first saw my words on paper.

According to that clear and definite method we have, in this country, built up a great study of English composition. Thousands of teachers, using thousands of volumes of carefully selected Models of Style, directed by thousands of textbooks on Composition and the Art of Writing (compendiums of analyzed and codified imitation) are at work, teaching the American youth how to write. It is not all based on Stevenson of course. He is not the only "sedulous ape" in literature who has confessed, but he is the arch-example. No author is so frequently quoted to the aspiring high-school student or the sulky Freshman. Now and then the long-tried undergraduate rebels. I have heard of a big Sophomore composition class at Harvard which finally came to the point where they would stamp whenever Stevenson's name was mentioned, as at the mention of the Ladies or of Yale.

And yet, though we make the undergraduates imitate even to stamping, somehow it does not work. They do not learn to write. A certain kind of result we do obtain—a colorless, standardized, uninteresting product, far enough removed from good writing. Can it be that Stevenson was wrong, or is it that we do not follow him properly? Perhaps it might moderate our expectations and account for some of our failures if we realized more clearly than we do a few facts about Stevenson's character and attainments in the years 1867–73 (when he was in the heat of his aping)—facts which he does not tell us in the essay, but which are necessary to any understanding of what he was doing, and which may shed some light on the propriety of recommending his example to our Freshman students. Incidentally this inquiry may throw a somewhat different light upon Stevenson's personality.

First of all it is worth while to direct our attention to the extent and thoroughness of his reading, as shown merely in the list of authors whom he imitated: Hazlitt, Lamb, Wordsworth, Sir Thomas Browne, Defoe, Hawthorne, Montaigne, Baudelaire,

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Obermann, Ruskin, Browning, Keats, Chaucer, Morris, Swinburne, John Webster, Congreve, Thackeray, Dumas. "So I might go on forever," he says. He has gone far enough to indicate that he was then an individual with reading not merely wider than that of the typical Freshman to whom we commend his example, but wider than that of the ordinary graduate from our literary courses.

And this reading had not been done superficially, but, instead, with care and enthusiasm and appreciation enough to give him definite ideas about the style of these various authors—not an achievement of industry merely but of genius as well. Only a certain measure of genius could give a man motive and energy for such industry. All through his boyhood and youth, he tells us, his passion was to learn to write: to this end he bent all his powers; he had little time for anything else and was content to be thought an idler while he worked at this.

However, imitation did not give him his style. He says it did, but he unsays it in the same paragraph. What it did was to give him command of his tools, familiarize him with various cadences, bring legions of words swarming to his call, put him into the best position to work out a style of his own. His later writings show few direct influences of his masters. One can rarely say, here he is imitating Lamb, here Defoe, here Sir Thomas Browne. Whatever he learned from others, his mature style is his own. The one thing which he got from his training, and which he never lost, is a certain self-consciousness, not exactly a blemish and yet not a merit, which is absent only from his letters—a fact which seems to me to explain why it is that many readers find the letters the most charming of all his work.

I do not wish to be understood as condemning Stevenson for what I have called his literary consciousness. One finds it in most writers who have read widely and admired what they have read. It is a form of humility and has the loveliness of that virtue, along with its danger of perversion into something stagnant and unreal. And besides he did not get all of his words and all of his cadences from books. The person who reads one of Stevenson's essays with a foreigner who does not know English very well, will be amazed at the number of colloquial phrases, smacking of the soil, which will

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cause the foreigner to stumble. He was too human to allow imitation to make him very bookish. Stevenson steered the course with success: let him who would follow be sure that he has taken at least as much pains to be born original.

II

As a matter of fact, Stevenson's "sedulous ape" period was a period of careful reading and thinking, and it seems to me that the benefit he got from it is that which a student is likely to get from a course in literature rather than from a course in composition conducted according to the Models-of-Style-and-Art-of-Writing plan. He widened his vocabulary and studied words and cadences by seeing them used. True, he impressed them upon his mind by his imitations, but, were it not irreverent, I should suggest that he did "by that much, too much." At any rate the reading was the important thing—a fact which imitators of Stevenson, whether aspiring writers or aspiring teachers of others how to write, are prone to overlook.

Another fact about this reading is important. He did not study a series of extracts, selected as models of style. He searched out books for himself, not what was famous merely, but what had meaning for him. That his interests were individual and intelligent, that he had ideas, that he was a thinker, is shown clearly enough by the books he read. The list I gave does not fairly represent his range nor his depth. Let the skeptical person glance at his *Familiar Studies of Men and Books*, or the essay on "Books That Have Influenced Me," or, still better, read the *Letters*. The finest result of his years of imitation is, in my opinion, not what he learned about writing but what he learned about reading. There is one paragraph in his essay on "Books That Have Influenced Me" which every student of literature ought to get by heart and profit by:

> The gift of reading, as I have called it, is not very common, nor very generally understood. It consists, first of all, in a vast intellectual endowment —a free grace, I find I must call it—by which a man rises to understand that he is not punctually right, nor those from whom he differs absolutely wrong. He may hold dogmas; he may hold them passionately; and he may know that others hold them but coldly, or hold them differently, or hold them not at all. Well, if he has the gift of reading, these others will be full of meat for him.

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They will see the other side of propositions and the other side of virtues. He need not change his dogma for that, but he may change his reading of that dogma, and he must supplement and correct his deductions from it. A human truth, which is always very much a lie, hides as much of life as it displays. It is men who hold another truth, or, as it seems to us, perhaps, a dangerous lie, who can extend our restricted field of knowledge, and rouse our drowsy consciences. Something that seems quite new, or that seems insolently false or very dangerous, is the test of a reader. If he tries to see what it means, what truth excuses it, he has the gift, and let him read. If he is merely hurt, or offended, or exclaims upon his author's folly, he had better take to the daily papers; he will never be a reader.

To me Stevenson is most wonderful as a reader. I know of nothing finer than the enthusiasm, the sympathy, and the gusto of his enjoyment of books. He enjoyed everything. He almost never spoke ill of a book except in some formal official pronouncement like an article for the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, when he was overawed by his surroundings and did not feel free to speak his mind. Catch him off his guard and he will find something to praise, something to be grateful for, in every book. I do not know of a better man to read after unless it be Lowell. And the height of his enthusiasm for reading he felt during the time when he was playing the "sedulous ape." In a letter written twenty years later he looks back with longing on the joy of these reading days. Speaking of a book which he had just finished, he says: "I have enjoyed this book as I—almost as I—used to enjoy books when I was going twenty—twenty-three; and these are the years for reading." He did not read solely for the purpose of playing the "sedulous ape."

During these years he was thinking things out for himself, which is the one motive to make a young man with blood in his veins and the world stirring about him become a reader of books. Graham Balfour describes Stevenson's state of mind over and over again. I quote one passage, which will do as well as any, from the chapter dealing with the years 1867–73:

He had begun to work out for himself his own views of life: his religion and his ethics, his relations to society and his own place in the universe. He was following out the needs of his mind and nature: strictly sincere with himself, he could never see things in their merely conventional aspect. He was "young in youth" and traveling at the fiery pace of his age and temperament; his senses were importunate, his intellect inquiring, and he must either find out his own way, or, as he might well have done, lose it altogether.

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Stevenson tells us, in various essays, a good deal about what he calls this "green sickness" of his youth, his eager curiosity to understand something of the mystery that confronts us all—the malady of thought which beset him then as sometime or other it besets every living man. Some men solve the problem by manual work (as Stevenson often wished he could), some manage to forget it by making a noise, and some by lotus-eating comfort. Stevenson found the way out by reading and thinking. In "Old Mortality," one of the essays in *Memories and Portraits*, he writes of exactly this thing:

> Books were the proper remedy: books of vivid human import, forcing upon their minds the issues, pleasures, business, importance, and immediacy of that life in which they stand; books of smiling or heroic temper, to excite or to console; books of large design, shadowing the complexity of that game of consequences to which we all sit down, the hanger-back not least.

It was this curiosity—this wonder about things—which made him a reader, and it is his thought about life, not his style, which gives him what greatness he has as a writer. We speculate a good deal about the reasons why our students do not read. As a matter of fact some of them do read; a great many more than most people think; the others do not for the same reason that they ought not to write. They are not wondering about life, they are not working things out for themselves, they are satisfied with conventional beliefs of other men's making, and are principally interested in something quite different—namely, what they call getting on in the world. So long as they remain thus, they will not read books without being told to, and not understand the ones they do read, and their writing will be—what it is at present.

Stevenson was a thinker, as was every other literary man of importance. He had ideas to express—not one or two or half a dozen but many. His imitators usually overlook all this and do not realize that there is a kind of blasphemy against the universe in trying to teach students to write who themselves have nothing to say.

The very record of his attempts as a "sedulous ape"—which has done so much harm by being made the basis of our false theory that a man may learn to write without having anything to say—that very record bears striking witness to the exuberance of

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Stevenson's ideas. A discourse upon the "Vanity of Morals," another planned upon the "Vanity of Knowledge," novels, epics, tragedies, satires, and lyrics without number bear witness to no ordinary fertility of mind. One specimen, "The Old Scotch Gardener," reprinted from a college magazine, shows keen thoughtful observation, a good deal of reading woven into the very texture of the man's thought, and a fine appreciation of human values, which is after all the best and most illuminating part of all his works. "They were not wit so much as humanity," says Mr. Edmund Gosse of Stevenson's jokes. No criticism of his works is truer of them than this would be, paying his style the very high compliment of ignoring it altogether. In his later writings when he speaks of style it is likely enough to be in the manner of the sentences following, which show that what he is thinking about is getting said what he has to say, the *what* being the important matter (he is speaking of his article called "Roads"): "It is quite the best thing I have ever done, to my taste. There are things expressed in it far harder to express than in anything else I ever had; *and that, after all, is the great point.* As for style, *ça viendra peut-être.*" And in the most mechanical of all his utterances upon the subject, in an essay where he pretends that the whole matter is one of a conjurer juggling two oranges, and that the performance may be pleasing enough even though one of them is rotten, occurs a sentence like the following, which shows that he did not forget (as some promulgators of his gospel of imitation do) that after all a writer's principal business is to say something. "And, on the other hand, no form of words must be selected, no knot must be tied in the phrases, unless knot and word be precisely what is wanted to forward and illuminate the argument: *for to fail in this is to swindle in the game.*"

III

We allow Stevenson to darken counsel for us in this matter of learning to write because we misunderstand and misrepresent him. Misreading his story of his own experiences, we have built up a system of teaching which does not work because it is based on principles eternally false. We have overlooked the facts and misapplied his theories in the pseudo-scientific manner characteristic

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of our present-day study of the arts, to our own confusion. The facts we overlook are these: that Stevenson was a man filled with that energy and enthusiasm in the pursuit of his calling which we term genius; that he was a wide and intelligent reader; that his mind teemed with ideas; and that learning to write with him meant learning to say clearly, and therefore honestly, what he had to say. Ignoring all these facts we try to apply his method without discrimination to our undergraduates and high-school students who, for the most part, are neither readers nor thinkers, who have little to say, who have little desire to learn to write and no excuse for writing, and who need first of all to have their interests stimulated and broadened, to be taught to think and to read, rather than to be burdened with countless and wearisome exercises in the expression of such poor ideas as they have or can borrow. We have taken the plan which served the purposes of this brilliant Scotsman and tried to apply it to the whole American people, whose purposes it will not serve, and we are surprised that failure is the result.

Many years after his "sedulous ape" period, when Stevenson had learned his trade and was growing famous, he said exactly the thing about this matter of learning to write that I have been trying to make clear. When he was once for some reason in Auckland, New Zealand, a newspaper reporter asked him what training he would advise for the young man who wished to learn to write. Stevenson's answer is published in the tenth chapter of *Stevensoniana*. It was, in three words, read, read, read. He advised not modern works but those of the older English authors and the classics—good solid reading to be studied for the subject-matter. I quote a few sentences:

> If a young man wishes to learn to write English [said Mr. Stevenson] he should read everything. I qualify that by excluding the whole of the present century in a body. People will read all of that that is worth reading for their own fun. If they read the seventeenth century and the eighteenth century; if they read Shakespeare and Thomas Browne, and Jeremy Taylor and Dryden's prose, and Samuel Johnson—and I suppose Addison, though I never read him myself—and browse about in all the authors of those two centuries, they will get the finest course of literature there is. . . . .

He goes on to mention more solid reading and ends with the classics.

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I am not maintaining that ideas are sufficient to make a writer. I am only contending that they are the first requisite, that you cannot make a writer, nor even begin to make one, without them, and that the attempt to do so warps the view of everyone concerned, makes them unconsciously tend to look upon literature as a matter of juggling words and the power of writing something to be gained by any man who will take the trouble, without respect to the caliber or furnishings of his mind. As a matter of fact literature is one form of thought, and the important thing in the writer is his insight or vision—his power to think and to see. If he have this, it is important for him and for everyone else that he take infinite pains, spend his whole lifetime, in trying to express his thoughts, in order that he may teach his fellows truly and fully, not falsely and partly, what he has to teach. But if he have not the vision, let him hold his peace. We lose our respect for the verities of life by attempting the impossible.

I have chosen to base my contention in regard to Stevenson upon those utterances of his which are usually, it seems to me, misinterpreted. His other writings leave no possible doubt as to his position. His essay on "The Morality of the Profession of Letters" is one long sermon on this subject.

> There are two duties incumbent on any man who enters the business of writing: truth to the fact and a good spirit in the treatment.

The writer sets himself up as a teacher and is responsible, first of all, for seeing the truth and for telling it.

> An author who has begged the question and reposes in some narrow faith cannot, if he would, express the whole or even many of the sides of this various existence; for his own life being maimed, some of them are not admitted in his theory, and were only dimly and unwillingly recognized in his experience. Hence the smallness, the triteness, and the inhumanity in works of merely sectarian religion; and hence we find equal although unsimilar limitation in works inspired by the spirit of the flesh or the despicable taste for high society. So that the first duty of any man who is to write is intellectual. Designedly or not, he has so far set himself up for a leader of the minds of men; and he must see that his own mind is kept supple, charitable, and bright.

We think too little, in our miscellaneous endeavors to teach the art of writing, of what a misfortune it would be if we could really do what we attempt. We do not consider what harm would be

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done, what endless possibilities for misleading the nation we should open up, could we give every narrow, superficial, misguided aspirant "the power of speech to stir men's blood." We cannot; the danger is avoided; but we have not the grace to be thankful.

The whole essay from which I have just been quoting is full of Stevenson's sense of the responsibility of the writer, of the importance of his doing his work well, seeing the truth and telling it, not for the sake of the power or the pay, but for the sake of righteousness.

> Here, then, is work worth doing and worth trying to do well. And so, if I were minded to welcome any great accession to our trade, it should not be from any reason of a higher wage, but because it was a trade which was useful in a very great and in a very high degree; which every honest tradesman could make more serviceable to mankind in his single strength; which was difficult to do well and possible to do better every year; which called for scrupulous thought on the part of all who practiced it, and hence became a perpetual education to their nobler natures; and which, pay it as you please, in the large majority of the best cases will still be underpaid.

When we have acquired some such respect for the business of writing we shall follow a different method in attempting to teach it. We shall see things in their true proportion, shall understand that a man has no call to write unless he has something to say, cannot learn otherwise, and ought not. We shall spend more time teaching our students to think, ask them to write less and that more thoughtfully. And when we find a student with ideas we shall not lower our standard of adequate expression, but rather raise it, and, attempting what is worth while and also possible, let us hope we shall have more success.

Mis-reading Stevenson has lead us astray in the matter of English Composition, but the pity is not so much that we should get from him something that is false as that we should fail to get something that is true. To be flat wrong about a question is not so bad; it is only a matter of knocking against a fact or two and one is set right. But to miss something rare and illuminating, something that sheds a flood of light on work and on education—that is indeed a pity. That is what, it seems to me, many people do in the case of Stevenson. They speak of the years of his training as if they were years spent with words and nothing but words. As a

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matter of fact he was thinking—exploring the earth and the heavens above, trying it, not always finding it good, sometimes finding it utterly bad. "To believe in immortality," he says somewhere, "is one thing, but it is first needful to believe in life." He could not always believe in it, and he would not unless he could sincerely. A letter quoted by Balfour, written in 1878, from a noisy café in the Latin Quarter of Paris, to his father from whom he had become partially estranged, sums up, in a wild, incoherent way, the history of the struggle of these years. It is fragmentary and far from clear: when a man's soul is weary and his beliefs are slowly forming out of chaos, he does not express himself with clearness, force, and ease. Its very confusion is eloquent of his thought and difficulties during the years when he was restlessly and eagerly seeking for any light he could find on the mystery of life. He found at last what seemed light to him, he emerged from the darkness with a belief in life and a courage for it which has been equaled by few. His solution he worked out partly from men, more from books; and his essays on his reading, with his own story flashing out from every line, are full of enthusiasm and gratitude for what books did for him. They are full of the freshness which the world had for him again—not exactly the freshness of youth, but that perennial freshness which the world has for the thinker, for the man who has learned to wonder. No man knows the meaning of literature or science or philosophy until this wonder has dawned upon his soul: and it is so a part of the deepest and best in us that Carlyle could make it a definition of religion. It is no small thing but a very great one to know how to read books.

Here was a man who knew how to read, and for that more than for anything else, it seems to me, these youthful essays of his are worth while. One may not agree with his opinions; one has only to understand him to see that that does not matter. The question is not one of the "rank" of Congreve or of Dumas. It is a question of how to seize hold of one of the deep and enduring satisfactions of man's life. To miss all this in Stevenson for the sake of petty word-mongering is to miss a fine and gracious account of the meaning of literature from a man who knew how to read.

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A FEW REASONS WHY

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Why, in spite of the increasing emphasis upon English, and the improvement both in the editing of English classics and in text-books on rhetoric, do high-school graduates continue to fall so far short of the eminently reasonable requirements of the normal schools? Why are they not only slipshod in expression and indifferent as to spelling and punctuation, but also sometimes glaringly ungrammatical in speech and writing? Why are their ideas so vague concerning the fundamental qualities of good composition and the obvious characteristics of the novel, the drama, the lyric? Why do they remember so little of the literature they have studied? Above all, why are they so unaccustomed to thinking for themselves and to asking questions about what they do not understand? They are earnest in spirit, and their interest in things of the mind, if not always a vital motive force, is at least easily aroused; but when it comes to ability to stick to a point, to exclude irrelevant matter, to follow logical order, to find the right word to clinch an important conception—to say nothing of knowledge of ordinary means of securing emphasis—in these acquirements they are often deplorably wanting.

Year after year these problems obtrude themselves, and somebody offers now this explanation and now another. It used to be believed that the time allotted to English was inadequate. With an increase in the amount of time came a demand for more written work, and then in due season for this or that change in the choice and method of teaching of the literature. At present, undoubtedly, the number of pupils assigned to a teacher in many cases interferes with good results; undoubtedly sweeping reforms in this direction are needed. But the present writer has not observed that the best-trained high-school graduates are those whose teachers have been responsible for the smallest number of students. This

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paper, therefore, offers a few suggestions of the older type—not new ones, perhaps, and arrived at in this instance merely by the obvious method of elimination.

It is not that the high-school product has been growing poorer during the past decade. With some downs among the ups, the tendency has been on the whole toward improvement. It must be confessed, however, that the slenderness of the improvement is at times somewhat discouraging. It is in point, then, to try to find, if not a specific, at least a remedy for the worst symptoms.

At the outset it must be granted that the method of investigation in this case is itself open to question. It was a resort to the testimony of students concerning the teaching they had received in the high school. Such testimony is likely to be colored, in some instances to be falsified, for several reasons, most notably these: (1) A spirit of loyalty to the school from which they came keeps many students from admitting anything which seems to them to its disadvantage. (2) In spite of their zeal for its honor, the best of them are prone to forget entirely what a teacher may believe she has insisted upon as of prime importance. In the case of some schools, therefore, conditions are much worse than the students acknowledge; in others, much better. In a final estimate of the amount, though not of the kind, of shortcomings, these two tendencies to a certain extent neutralize each other. It would of course be unfair to make any ultimate official rating of schools on the basis of testimony of this sort. Yet after all, is there not a criticism of method implied even in a student's forgetting?

The following are among the questions that were asked of two hundred and twenty-seven first-year normal students, representing forty-seven different schools:

1. How many periods each week were given to the study of English in each respective year of your high-school course?

2. Write a list of the classics studied.

3. Describe the method of study: (*a*) How was the lesson assigned? (*b*) What were the usual points considered in recitation?

4. Give an account of the work in composition: (*a*) How often in each of the four years did you write a paper? (*b*) Were the subjects assigned by the teacher? (*c*) Write a representative list of the subjects about which you

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wrote. (*d*) Were the papers criticized by the teacher? (*e*) Did you correct the indicated errors? (*f*) What kinds of errors were noted on your papers? (*g*) Describe in detail your training in the making of outlines.

5. What matters essential to good composition were emphasized most by your teachers?

The answers to the questions may be summarized thus: As much time is now being spent on English in these schools as can reasonably be expected. "Four or five periods per week for four years" was uniformly stated. The literature read comprised the usual college-entrance material, and in amount ranged from twelve to thirty-three classics. Memories were evidently defective concerning just what had been studied, and not infrequently concerning the spelling of such names as were recorded; e.g., *The Deserted Villiage*, *Burk's Conciliation*, *The Illiad*, *Sesame Lillies*, *Silas Mariner*, etc. Written work ranged in frequency from daily to monthly, the average being weekly. Only 13 per cent of the schools required papers as seldom as once a month. The subjects for the most part were fairly varied in character and in the form called for. The students were usually aware that they had once written description, narration, exposition, and argumentation, though their minds became hazy when they were unexpectedly asked to write in any one of them again. They had been allowed some freedom of choice, and the subjects were drawn from their own experience as well as from the classics. Literary subjects, however, preponderated, with a marked emphasis upon character sketches and "lives of the great writers."

The papers were always criticized in some fashion, and were always returned to the writers, with at least the expectation that the errors should not be repeated. Judging from the subsequent performance of these writers, this expectation was not realized with any more certainty in the cases in which the corrections were made and verified than in the cases in which it was judged sufficient to have pointed out the blunders. Such results may have been due to the fact that the correction was not made impressively by the teacher, or, what is more significant, that only the more superficial errors were noted at all. It may be that the reporting students in some instances forgot how often they had been guilty of lapses from

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unity, clearness, and coherence. At any rate, many of those most manifestly untrained in these essentials could remember little more than that they had misspelled words and had been careless in punctuation, and that they were prone to mistakes in grammar—faults which they had by no means overcome at the time of reporting. On the other hand, many admitted having been accustomed to seeing on their high-school papers the identical corrections found necessary in the normal school. It cannot be said, then, that the errors in written work were due mainly to lack of correction at the hands of high-school teachers; unless, indeed, one entertain a suspicion that it was zeal for the reputation of those teachers which induced the loyal reporters to lay claim to corrections which had been made seldom, if ever. One conclusion, however, is incontrovertible: the high-school methods of criticism, whatever they were or were not, were in a majority of cases ineffective. Nothing less can be said of teaching which results in such English as this, culled hastily from the answers: "These papers were all lengths"; "My first training in outline work in high school was outlining the plot in *Ivanhoe*. This, if I remember correctly, was generally main topics"; "We had to report once a month upon a book that we had read. They had to be of a variety of fiction, historical novel, poetry, and biography"; "In each prospective year, there were four periods," etc.; "We were usually assigned for each day's class work; first, to read," etc. The methods employed failed notably in aiding the student quickly to make right a mistake once or even frequently pointed out. One of the most trying features in the normal-school situation is the common failure on the part of the first-year student to return to the examining teacher an adequately revised paper. Consequently a large part of the instructor's energy, all of which should be spent on advanced academic and on pedagogical subjects, is diverted to drill of the most elementary kind.

The question concerning the topical outline was asked because it is usually found necessary in normal school to teach the form as an entirely new procedure. It is taught not as an arbitrary symbol, but as a vital aid to the clearness and orderly progression of thought essential to intellectual grasp and intelligible expression. If it

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were a mere matter of form, the emphasis laid upon it would be an invitation to adverse criticism. But the construction of an outline is so distinctly an aid to unity and coherence, and the inability to frame one so commonly accompanies loose, disjointed thinking and expression, that its inclusion in or omission from the high-school course would seem to be significant.

Only 16 per cent of the schools were reported as having given really careful drill in the making of outlines, and 6 per cent were in the doubtful list; i.e., some of the graduates thought they had had such drill, while their classmates were equally sure they had not. Here, then, would seem to be a clear field for suggestion. Such suggestion should reach farther than the high-school course. The beginnings of outlining should be made far down in the grades; before the high-school period, the topical conception of matter studied and matter to be expressed should have become habitual. The making of subdivisions, with such increasing complexity as a given subject requires and the maturing mind comprehends, then becomes a process of development. The consciousness of this process has vital consequences, not merely in oral or written composition, but in all learning.

The transfer of emphasis to training in the construction of outlines will not, however, necessarily save the situation. This was seen by a glance at the entire record of those high schools which claim to have taught outlining with some thoroughness. The other items were not invariably so creditable. It is possible to have been taught to make outlines, and still to persist in inaccuracy about more (so called) elementary matters. To bring about even comparative rightness other measures are called for. Methods of correction must be vitalized. The student becomes dulled to the constant recurrence of the *p*, *sp*, and other abbreviations that trail along the expectant margins of his themes. Their presence too often marks, not an error normal to his stage of development, but a fixed habit. He may insert the missing comma or correct the misspelled word, with no certainty of responding to the next occasion for similar vigilance. He must be stimulated, in some cases even startled, out of the lethargy of custom. If he be unmoved by the motives we assume to be strong—desire for excellence, ambition

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to excel, lust for marks and standing, dread of not passing—then we must find others of greater validity. Elementary teachers talk much in these days of motivation. They have found that an immediate special motive, often utilitarian in character, is more impelling than a general one, however worthy. Pupils in the grades write letters to individuals who will read their contents with personal interest. They construct dramas that are to be played, stories that are to be given to somebody who really desires them All this is very different from feeding the maw of a waste-basket, or writing only for the eye of a jaded teacher.

Even drill is unavailing in establishing right habits, unless the mind acts energetically with each repetition. Grammar-school teachers motivate drill exercises by having them written for the ostensible purpose of helping another class to overcome similar faults. Why do not the high schools motivate more effectively? A system of interstate high-school correspondence does much to vitalize composition. If the penalty for carelessness and any persistence of frequently noted faults were the refusal of permission to send the letter, with the inevitable consequence of a missing answer, the erring student would probably try harder to meet the requirements of correctness. Conferences among teachers of high schools and grammar schools would open many opportunities of reciprocity, from the writing of matter intrinsically interesting to the exercises designed to help, in a humorous way perhaps, the younger pupils to overcome their besetting faults of form, but really intended quite as much to serve as reminders to the writers.

A little more attention to the psychology of habit-breaking and habit-formation would accomplish wonders. When clear explanation and a few repetitions do not enable the right habit to gain a foothold, appeals to eye and ear should be made more startling. The use of varicolored ink and chalk, the incorporation of an evasive rule in a mnemonic rhyme, the singing of such a rhyme if need be —these devices are not beneath the dignity of the high school if they prove a real economy. The most troublesome errors are not those which naturally belong to a student's present stage of development, but those which should have been conquered at an earlier stage, and which have therefore a longer pedigree of habit behind

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them. Such being the case, it is wise to concentrate attention upon them by such motivation as the preparing of booklets, cards, etc., to be sent to the classes in which such faults should be attacked for the first time and finally overcome. The exercise will then take on the interest that attaches to making something that is to be put to immediate use by somebody who needs it.

It remains to notice the questions concerning the classroom teaching of literature. The answers to these lay bare another spot where trouble lurks. Of the reported schools 40 per cent could not be rated otherwise than as poor on the basis of this testimony, and 21 per cent more were scarcely fair. These schools had either not made sufficient impression on their graduates to enable them to give any definite account of the ideas they had gained concerning literature, or else their instruction had been bald and formal to the last degree. Many students had apparently spent weeks, months, and years in a dreary study of "style, diction, and illusions." If to these they added "characters and plot," it is to be feared that the latter were as mechanical or as vague. Some had been concerned chiefly with "reproduction, words, sentence-construction, grammar, and memory gems"; or with "diction, figures of speech, and derivations." Even when definite ideas had been gained concerning structure, characters, and style, it was, as the remainder of the students' work showed, through a route of dreary formalism. Literature had never been a phase of life.

One of the weakest points in high-school teaching as a whole is the method of assigning lessons. The direction most often given is, according to this report, to "read a certain number of pages." "Read and explain," they echo; "Read the whole, then explain the parts"; "Study references and words"; "Study words and illusions"—illusions indeed! More than 70 per cent are open to this criticism, or to the conclusion that the teacher's method was not sufficiently definite to have left any impression. Perhaps this is also true of the method of assigning composition subjects. Instead of making a student eager to be at the next day's lesson or the writing of a paper, the teacher may let him pass from her presence in a puzzled, vague, or, worse still, an indifferent state of mind. From the lips of live teachers, it is of course possible that

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the mere direction to read a chapter may have become so full of rich suggestion that the young reader crowds with illuminating discoveries the hour so spent. It is also possible that, with the buzz-saw accompaniment of fifty quibbling, nagging, all-too-definite questions, the most thrilling scene in *Macbeth* may be mangled forever. Nevertheless the chances are on the whole in favor of the definite assignment. "Read and explain" is too likely to mean that, in her hand-to-mouth intellectual existence, the teacher has had no time to get ready anything better—small blame to her for that, sometimes!—or that, Latin or history being the subject she is prepared and was engaged to teach, and English having been thrown in by somebody else for good measure, she is at a loss how to do anything at all with such elusive material as literature.

Enough of fault-finding! Fortunately the situation has its sunny aspect. There are some high schools whose graduates say of their teachers, and make good the saying: "They went over each lesson so carefully as they assigned it that we had a background for our work; they made the subject seem so interesting, so alive, that we were eager to study it for ourselves." These are the students whose names linger longest in the memory. Year after year from certain high schools come such as these—alert, intelligent, responsive. Entering so trained that every normal-school teacher blesses the high school which has sent them forth, they undertake each new task with zest and complete it with thoroughness. Then, beginning their professional life sufficiently well equipped to prove their quality at the outset, they keep through the years the broad vision of scholarship and of culture which impels them to continue to avail themselves of every possible means of acquirement and of discipline. Only to such as these should be intrusted the teaching of English.

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SOME EXPERIENCES WITH ORAL COMPOSITION

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The authorities of the New York City high schools have felt that, of late, written composition has been emphasized at the expense of oral composition. Therefore in a new syllabus for the general guidance of English teachers, much stress has been laid upon oral composition, and provision has been made for an oral examination in English previous to graduation.

In view of the improvement expected in our work, a committee of teachers has undertaken to find out what has been done even in our present unregenerate state. A digest of the teachers' combined experience with this form of recitation has proved suggestive to individuals seeking to better their instruction. What follows is that summary and not an attempt to discuss the subject of oral composition in any original or well-proportioned manner.

At what place in the course do exercises in oral composition produce the best results? While each of the eight terms (half-years) is indicated by somebody, the majority of the schools think that the first year or the last year is the best time for pushing this work. In the first year the children are more enthusiastic, ingenuous, and teachable, the exercise is still a novelty, and the recitation-time is sufficient for sustained effort. In some quarters, indeed, there is time for a weekly "unprepared recitation," at which various forms of impromptu oral work are attempted. It is found that even timid pupils will respond to the general enthusiasm, though frequently some easy task must be given them, such as retelling an incident from the book they are reading or relating some familiar personal experience. The Senior, on the other hand, has broader interests and a larger stock of ideas and he is not always shy. His vocabulary is more inclusive and his method has been improved, not merely by practice, but also by the study of grammar, rhetoric, and literary models. While the Senior does not always speak with

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the finish that might be expected, he often presents his ideas with originality and force. The most popular form of expression with him seems to be formal or informal argumentation.

But what of the pupil who has lost his childish enthusiasm and has yet to acquire Senior confidence? With these people in mid-course, especially in the third year, conditions are difficult. The pupils' attention is divided among five or even six subjects, some of them with accompanying Regents' examinations. In English, syllabus requirements are not relaxed but recitation hours are cut down, and promotion to Senior grade depends entirely on an examination covering three years of work. This involves not merely grammar and the books of the reading and practice list but also "problems" in construction—pure description, strict exposition, and other prescribed forms not mastered by the average youth without a lengthy technical drill. Extensive routine writing seems necessary, and where is there time for oral composition with its individual and time-consuming exercises? How can a teacher put three pints into a quart measure?

The answer seems to be that oral composition is a stimulant to the lazy or the careless student and an excellent auxiliary to all phases of English work. It has a strong, favorable reaction upon written expression, both by stimulating thought and by improving diction and construction. It leads away from slovenly, languid, or stilted language. One school by means of oral reports reviews for examination the books of the reading and practice list. Others think that it is an interesting and economical method of outlining plots, criticizing characters, reproducing or enlarging descriptions, summarizing expositions and arguments, etc. In the grammar review, also, definitions, distinctions, and classifications may be expounded orally in a broad way. In fact, wherever ground is to be covered rapidly in review for the sake of a class, well-planned work in oral composition may be a help rather than a hindrance.

This form of exercise as distinguished from a quizzing process or the familiar written notes has been used as an auxiliary in connection with various phases of English work; for instance, in giving "book reports" on voluntary readings; in reviewing current events; in summarizing the passage after interpretative

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reading; in practicing argument by formal debate from a brief, or informal debate from mere memoranda, or by impromptu discussion.

The most successful exercises in oral composition, in the case of some students, deal with topics not directly connected with English work. Other studies often furnish both subject-matter and incentive to talk. A retarded boy, whose manuscripts seemed to prove his lack of expression, reluctantly rose to give a three-minute report on some voluntary reading and talked eloquently for twenty minutes on the life and achievements of Bonaparte. Not only history and the literature of foreign languages have offered inspiration for topical talks but shop-work, laboratory experience, field work, and athletics have loosened the tongues of boys and girls not of bookish tendencies. Matters of current interest to the whole school, freely discussed in the corridors and playground may, with a little management, be discussed just as freely before a class. But best of all for drawing out "buttoned-up people" is the topic of personal interest to the student himself—the call to rise, mount his hobby, and ride, ride!

The actual practice of teachers in conducting topical recitations or arranging for oral reports is quite varied according to the personality of the student, his degree of maturity, his familiarity with the exercise, the nature of the topic, etc. The following suggestions are the outcome of successful experience. Let the topic be self-chosen by the student (perhaps with the advice of the teachers or the help of a suggestive list)—assigned by the teacher (in a review, or as a device for concentrating attention in new reading)—assigned by the class (in upper grades)—assigned impromptu (to experienced pupils or if topics are very familiar and easy). Have the speaker face the class—talk one, two, or three minutes and longer as practice perfects—stand a quiz on points left hazy—repeat the entire talk after criticism by pupils and (if necessary) by the teacher. Have the listeners take notes and perhaps report the talks—criticize favorably and perhaps unfavorably—answer arguments advanced or elaborate explanations offered.

A lively thrust and parry beneficial to the interest of the recitation is brought about, in one school, by a system of student critics on students' work. If the dictum of another school is correct,

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that "extemporaneous talking and oral expression springing up incidentally is most valuable," this device deserves special mention. The best students are appointed critics for a limited time or even for a whole term. The scope of their criticism is announced from time to time. They comment on individual efforts or on the recitation hour as a whole. For instance, topical compositions written on the board, prepared themes read aloud, or any other exercise will be criticized in some prearranged way, giving rise to an eager defense by the author and producing an impromptu discussion by other members of the class who side with the author or the critic. The teacher simply conducts the debate, which frequently proves to be the first of a series. A skilful critic may be continued in office without harm because he becomes successful in arousing the whole class to vigorous oral expression.

Another successful effort to break away from the conventional recitation makes much of conversations in the classroom and it has taken two forms: conversation among a small group of pupils on a prescribed topic, and informal dramatic renderings of passages occurring in the required readings, such as *Ivanhoe*, *David Copperfield*, *Silas Marner*, and the *Odyssey*.

Younger pupils converse readily, though crudely, on their reasons for studying Latin, French, or German, their school-plans for the near future, what they learned from recent experiences in examination, and the like. Older pupils will choose or be assigned topics pertaining to community life, as well as school life. "The group of pupils stand and keep the ball of conversation rolling for a given time, frequently five minutes. One will naturally lead and others will hang back, but it is the duty of the readier talkers to bring others into the conversation, by direct appeal if necessary." In courtesy all will try to contribute something. This exercise not only arouses interest and gives practice in impromptu expression but also teaches the elements of good manners to those whose home training is defective. They learn not to interrupt or contradict, they hear and use the customary phrases of apology, they finally come to discuss without growing disputatious. Used with discretion this exercise brings to pupils, even the youngest, some of the self-discipline furnished by debate.

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In several schools dramatic renderings of passages taken from the more objective literature help to make the scenes and the characters more real to the students. Reference is here made to exercises that require either no written rendering or only such preparation as is usual for a recitation. No costuming is required and no rehearsing, though a consultation among those appointed to take part is useful, since somebody must lead throughout the conversation.

Frequently the rendering is impromptu, except for the consultation referred to, and some striking scene involving several characters is enacted, the dialogue and action shaping itself as the conversation proceeds. In this way the class reviews passages concerning Godfry and Dunstan, Silas and the men at the Rainbow, the Black Knight and his reverend entertainer, Ulysses and Polyphemus, etc. As a written exercise, incidents told in the third person and passages showing mental states of characters may be turned into dialogue and soliloquies. The best of these compositions will be worth a hearing before the class, without the use of manuscript. Especially the soliloquies, once written and now given orally but not from memory, often develop interest and force.

Though there is much profit in these dramatic renderings they must be used cautiously; they may easily be misapplied or carried too far. They must not be allowed to develop "stars" but must include, first and last, all members of the class. Usually the impromptu dialogue with a few natural gestures is a sufficient departure from the customary interpretative reading. In some cases, however, it has worked well to use simple accessories like staves, bows and arrows, ropes, etc., and to give the pupils considerable freedom of motion.

While this summary deals entirely with oral composition, the teachers whose experiences are here embodied realize keenly the twin problem, oral expression. In our public schools, foreign and often illiterate families furnish a large proportion of the pupils. Therefore the teachers have earnestly resolved to let the important points of oral expression be an object of effort and of criticism in all oral composition.

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THE NEW PLAN OF ADMISSION IN ENGLISH TO HARVARD COLLEGE

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In June and September, 1911, were given the first examinations under the new plan for admission to Harvard College. The institution of this new plan was an attempt to meet the needs of those for whom the requirements as defined under the old plan have seemed so rigid as to make it well-nigh impossible for a school to adapt its teaching to a small minority of boys preparing for Harvard. The new plan is not supposed to be easier than the old, but merely less complicated. Nor does the new plan supersede the old: it is proposed merely as an alternative. For some years, at least, the old plan seems likely to be chosen by a majority of the candidates for admission.

Under the new plan the testimony of the school is accepted as regards the quantity of work done, and the quality of the work done is tested by four examinations, one of which must be English. To illustrate the plan more fully, I shall first try to explain what the Committee on Admission regards as a satisfactory statement from the school concerning the course of study; secondly, to show what is required in the examinations, and particularly in the examination in English; and, thirdly, I shall reprint, with some comment, the papers given under the new plan in June and September, 1911.

No candidate may present himself for examination unless the Committee on Admission has approved an official statement from the principal of his school, showing in detail the subjects which the boy has studied and the amount of work done in each, the amount of time devoted to these subjects, and the marks received. Care should be taken to make this account as specific as possible. In English it is particularly desirable that the committee should know the amount of actual composition that is given and the amount of personal conference between teacher and pupil. It is

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also useful to know what percentage is necessary for recommendation to those colleges that accept certificates, or to know in which third of his class the candidate stands.

This statement of the school course will not be approved unless it shows, first, that the candidate has completed four years of preparation; second, that his course has consisted chiefly of languages, science, mathematics, and history, no one of which may be omitted; and, third, that two studies have been pursued beyond their elementary stages; that is, to the point required by the present advanced examinations of Harvard College, or by the examinations of the College Entrance Examination Board. It is not necessary that the candidate present himself for examination in either of these two advanced studies; if he does so present himself, however, he will not receive credit for either of those studies unless he exhibits in his examination the attainments of an advanced student; that is to say, if history is one of the two advanced subjects and also one of the four subjects in which the candidate offers himself for examination, a degree of knowledge merely sufficient to pass elementary history will not be adequate. The importance of a satisfactory school record under the new plan may be indicated by the fact that of the 186 candidates who applied in 1911 to be admitted under the new plan, 46, or about 25 per cent, were not allowed to take the examinations because their high-school records failed to receive the approval of the Committee on Admission.

If the school record is approved, the candidate is required to present himself for examination in four subjects, as follows:

a) English.
b) Latin, or, for candidates for the degree of S.B., either French or German.
c) Mathematics or physics or chemistry.
d) Any subject (not already selected under *b* or *c*) from the following list: Greek, French, German, history, mathematics, physics, chemistry.

These four examinations must be taken at one time, either in June or in September.

The results of these examinations, together with the evidence of the school record, are considered by the Committee on Admission as a unit; that is to say, the Committee on Admission does not ask if a boy has passed in history or if he has passed in Latin

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or English; it asks, rather, if the impression that he has made upon those who have known him best in school, supplemented by the impression that he has made upon his examiners in four subjects which are considered as typical, justifies his admission to Harvard College. It is not, under the new plan, possible for a student to be credited on the college books with having passed in history and English, but having failed in physics. Under the new plan he either is or is not found to be fitted to pursue the studies of the Freshman year in Harvard College; in other words, he is either accepted unconditionally or told that he must try all the examinations over again.

It will readily be seen that in such a scheme the examination in English has a very important place. Its main purpose is not to answer the question, Is the boy fitted to enter the prescribed course in English composition or the elective course in English literature of the Freshman year? but rather to help answer the larger question, Has the boy shown in his examination in English sufficient grasp, maturity, and "gumption" to become a useful member of the University?

It is, of course, impossible to say exactly what weight in the decision of the examiner is given to spelling, sentence structure, punctuation, etc., but perhaps the following extracts from a list of suggestions to readers of entrance examination books in English in June, 1911, may serve to indicate the point of view of the examiner:

In judging the books of candidates under the new plan, readers are to be particularly watchful for signs of real capacity and power, even though the training may be somewhat irregular. Readers are, however, to mark with reasonable severity, in the case of candidates under the new plan as well as of others, all fundamental errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, idiom, sentence structure, paragraph structure, etc. An effort should be made to distinguish errors that are due to hasty composition under somewhat disconcerting conditions from those that are the result of training and habit. Greater importance, of course, is to be attached to errors of the latter class. In considering misspelling, it is to be remembered that a candidate who attempts unsuccessfully to use rather long and difficult words is to be regarded more leniently than one who misspells common words. Great importance should be attached to the answers to questions particularly suited to test the initiative of the candidate. To a certain degree, conspicuous success in handling such questions may be allowed to atone for deficiency elsewhere.

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To guide readers in their decisions upon books, it is desirable that the following general points be considered and reported upon:

1. Indicate every case of striking deficiency in technical knowledge of English composition.

2. Indicate every case of conspicuous lack of acquaintance with the books. If the ignorance of the books used for study is striking, note that as a separate fact.

3. Indicate every case where unusual skill in English composition seems to atone for a certain lack of acquaintance with the prescribed books.

4. Indicate every case where unusual knowledge of the books would seem to excuse a certain lack of training and practice in English composition.

5. Note unusual ability or deficiency of any other kind than those already named.

6. Give an opinion on this question: Does the examination show that the candidate is ready to take English A?[1]

7. Give an opinion on this question: Regardless of English A, does the examination show that the candidate has the necessary grasp and maturity to undertake the work of the Freshman year?

The aim of the new plan, so far as it affects the papers in English, will probably be made much clearer by an examination of the papers reprinted below. The first of these is that for June, 1911; the second is that for September, 1911.

ENGLISH

(*Three Hours*)

NEW PLAN

Write carefully: the quality of your English is even more important than your knowledge of the subject-matter. Plan your answers before you write them, and look them over carefully after you have written them. Do not try to do more than you can do well in the time allowed.

A

Answer three of the following six questions:

1. Select from any play which you have read an important character who has one marked weakness, and show into what difficulties this weakness leads him.

2. Quote twenty consecutive lines of poetry and then tell very briefly why you think them good poetry.

3. Suppose a public library, wishing to interest people in good reading, to be composing brief descriptive lists of novels and essays. Suppose the first note to have run thus: "*Treasure Island*, by Robert Louis Stevenson:

[1] English A is a course in English composition prescribed for those Freshmen who do not anticipate it by passing an advanced examination.

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An exciting romance of the sea, pirates, buried treasure, and other adventures. Vivid descriptions of both scenes and persons. John Silver, the cook, is one of the great characters in English prose fiction." Write similar brief descriptive notes for any three novels or books of essays that you have read, whether on the prescribed list or not.

4. Identify as many as you can of the characters on the following list by telling in what book each occurs and by describing each in two or three adjectives:

Virginius	Madam Eglantine
Sydney Carton	Ichabod Crane
Jessica	Malvolio
Guinevere	Squire Thornhill
"Poor Peter"	Apollyon
Dunstan Cass	Locksley

5. What are the chief differences between prose and poetry?

6. Suppose that you found in one book the statement that Dr. Johnson's manners were very rude and in another book the statement that Dr. Johnson's manners were not rude. Tell as fully as you can what steps you would take and what general principles you would apply in deciding which of these statements was more nearly correct.

B

Write a composition on one of the following subjects. Plan your composition carefully, and pay special attention to paragraphing. Allow not less than one hour for this part of the paper.

7. Any one of the questions under A that you have not already answered.

8. Have you ever read a book which you enjoyed more than any of the books on the prescribed list? Why did you like it?

9. Write a character sketch of any person of your acquaintance who reminds you of any character in a book. Try to explain the resemblances as fully and vividly as you can.

10. Tell, in the form of a letter, the story of some vacation trip or adventure.

11. The sources and uses of rubber.

12. Photographic lenses.

13. Tell, from the point of view of one of the chief characters, the story of some narrative poem.

C

Answer two of the following questions:

14. In what period of English literature do you think the following passage was written? Why?

> Avoid Extremes; and shun the fault of such,
> Who still are pleas'd too little or too much.
> At ev'ry trifle scorn to take offence,
> That always shows great pride, or little sense;
> Those heads, as stomachs, are not sure the best,

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Which nauseate all, and nothing can digest.
Yet let not each gay Turn thy rapture move;
For fools admire, but men of sense approve:
As things seem large which we thro' mists descry,
Dulness is ever apt to magnify.

15. Explain as many as you can of the following phrases:

"Caviare to the general"	"Machiavellian"
"Ocean greyhound"	"Open sesame"
"Apple of discord"	"Return from Elba"
"Tilting at windmills"	"Ugly duckling"
"Quixotic"	

16. Retell in your own words, and rather fully, the incident narrated in the following passage:

Hamlet: So much for this, sir: now shall you see the other;
You do remember all the circumstance?
Horatio: Remember it, my lord!
Ham.: Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting,
That would not let me sleep: methought I lay
Worse than the mutines in the bilboes. Rashly,
And praised be rashness for it, let us know,
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
When our deep plots do pall: and that should teach us
There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will—
Hor.: That is most certain.
Ham.: Up from my cabin,
My sea-gown scarf'd about me, in the dark
Groped I to find out them; had my desire,
Finger'd their packet, and in fine withdrew
To mine own room again; making so bold,
My fears forgetting manners, to unseal
Their grand commission; where I found, Horatio—
O royal knavery!—an exact command,
Larded with many several sorts of reasons,
Importing Denmark's health and England's too,
With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life,
That, on the supervise, no leisure bated,
No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
My head should be struck off.
Hor.: Is't possible?
Ham.: Here's the commission: read it at more leisure.
But wilt thou hear me how I did proceed?
Hor.: I beseech you.
Ham.: Being thus be-netted round with villanies—
Ere I could make a prologue to my brains,
They had begun the play—I sat me down,
Devised a new commission, wrote it fair:
I once did hold it, as our statists do,
A baseness to write fair and labour'd much
How to forget that learning, but, sir, now
It did me yeoman's service: wilt thou know
The effect of what I wrote?

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Horatio: Ay, good my lord.
Hamlet: An earnest conjuration from the king,
As England was his faithful tributary,
As love between them like the palm might flourish,
As peace should still her wheaten garland wear
And stand a comma 'tween their amities,
And many such-like 'As'es of great charge,
That, on the view and knowing of these contents,
Without debatement further, more or less,
He should the bearers put to sudden death,
Not shriving-time allow'd.
Hor.: How was this seal'd?
Ham.: Why, even in that was heaven ordinant.
I had my father's signet in my purse,
Which was the model of that Danish seal;
Folded the writ up in form of the other,
Subscribed it, gave't the impression, placed it safely.
The changeling never known. Now, the next day
Was our sea-fight; and what to this was sequent
Thou know'st already.

June, 1911

ENGLISH

(*Three Hours*)

NEW PLAN

Write carefully: the quality of your English is even more important than your knowledge of the subject-matter. Plan your answers before you write them, and look them over carefully after you have written them. Do not try to do more than you can do well in the time allowed.

A

Answer three of the following questions:

1. Select from any novel which you have read an important character who has one marked weakness, and show into what difficulties this weakness leads him.

2. Describe, from the point of view of a spectator in the theater, that scene which most appealed to you in any of the plays which you have read. (Do not give a summary of the plot, but treat the scene as a picture or tableau.)

3. Suggest other suitable titles for any three of the following books: *Julius Caesar*, *Merchant of Venice*, *Twelfth Night*, *As You Like It*, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, *The House of the Seven Gables*, *The Tale of Two Cities*, *Silas Marner*, *Sesame and Lilies*, *The Rape of the Lock*.

4. Identify as many as you can of the characters on the following list by telling in what book each occurs and by describing each in two or three adjectives:

Captain Sentry	Rosalind
Fluellen	Sir Plume
Beatrix	Frank Castlewood
Gratiano	Matthew Maule
Alexander Selkirk	Viola
Sir Guyon	Isaac of York

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5. Quote twenty consecutive lines of poetry, and then tell very briefly why you think them good poetry.

6. Arrange in chronological order Dr. Johnson, Milton, Scott, Ben Jonson, Pope. Arrange these names in what you think would have been Wordsworth's order of preference. Arrange them in what you think would have been Addison's order of preference.

B

Write a composition on one of the following subjects. Plan your composition carefully, and pay special attention to paragraphing. Allow not less than one hour for this part of the paper.

7. Any one of the questions under A which you have not already answered.

8. A description of some person, house, or village with which you are familiar.

9. Write a short account of the career and aims of some *one* of the following persons: Aeneas, Pericles, Charlemagne, Cromwell, Alexander Hamilton.

10. Which of your studies do you think has done you the most good? Why?

11. Photographic plates.

12. Wireless telegraphy.

C

Answer two of the following questions:

11. Tell in your own words as fully as possible what the following passage means:

Hamlet: To be, or not to be: that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? To die: to sleep;
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die; to sleep;
To sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause: there's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life;
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscover'd country from whose bourn
No traveller returns, puzzles the will
And makes us rather bear those ills we have

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Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pitch and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action.

12. Which of the following passages do you prefer? Why?

(a) See what delights in sylvan scenes appear!
Descending Gods have found Elysium here.
In woods bright Venus with Adonis stray'd,
And chaste Diana haunts the forest-shade.
Come, lovely nymph, and bless the silent hours,
When swains from shearing seek their nightly bow'rs,
When weary reapers quit the sultry field,
And crown'd with corn their thanks to Ceres yield.
This harmless grove no lurking viper hides,
But in my breast the serpent Love abides.
Here bees from blossoms sip the rosy dew,
But your Alexis knows no sweets but you.
Oh deign to visit our forsaken seats,
The mossy fountains, and the green retreats!
Where'er you walk, cool gales shall fan the glade;
Trees, where you sit, shall crowd into a shade;
Where'er you tread, the blushing flowers shall rise,
And all things flourish where you turn your eyes.
Oh! how I long with you to pass my days,
Invoke the Muses, and resound your praise!
Your praise the birds shall chant in ev'ry grove,
And winds shall waft it to the pow'rs above,
But would you sing, and rival Orpheus' strain,
The wond'ring forest soon should dance again;
The moving mountains hear the pow'rful call,
And headlong streams hang list'ning in their fall!

(b) The Rainbow comes and goes,
And lovely is the Rose,
The Moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare,
Waters on a starry night
Are beautiful and fair;
The sunshine is a glorious birth;
But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath past away a glory from the earth.
Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
And while the young lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound,
To me alone there came a thought of grief:
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
And I again am strong:
The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep;
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong;
I hear the Echoes through the mountains throng,
The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep,

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And all the earth is gay;
Land and Sea
Give themselves up to jollity,
And with the heart of May
Doth every Beast keep holiday;—
Thou Child of Joy,
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy
Shepherd-boy!

13. Explain as many as you can of the following phrases:

"Gordian knot"
"New lamps for old"
"Sour grapes"
"Whited sepulchres"
"Malapropism"
"Fabian policy"
"Widow's mite"
"To cry wolf"
"Barmecide feast"

September, 1911

A few comments upon these papers may serve to suggest some general principles. It will be noticed that Part B of the paper requires a composition of fair length, the subject of which may be drawn from a considerable variety of fields. The subject need not have anything to do with English or with any other school study, although certain subjects, drawn from the field of English, history, and science, are proposed. It has seemed desirable that this composition should generally be either an exposition or a narrative of fact. Good results usually appear from those subjects which permit a student to select a favorite book or person for discussion. Such subjects are Nos. 8 and 11 of the June paper, and Nos. 8 and 10 of the September paper. The composition written under B is almost always, and should be, the longest single answer in the paper. It is, therefore, very useful in showing whether the candidate has or has not learned to make one point grow naturally out of another and to fit one paragraph firmly and neatly into another.

The purpose of Part A of the paper is partly to show the candidate's ability to write, partly to show whether he remembers the subject-matter of the books that he has read, and partly to show whether he has a definite and genuine appreciation of good literature. These purposes are combined in almost every question in this group. Most of the questions in this group may be briefly answered by anyone who knows the books well. It has been the aim of the examiner to set some questions in this group which can be answered from almost any possible list of reading, but which

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nevertheless require a very specific answer. Such questions are the first in the June paper and the first two in the September paper. One important aim of the new-plan paper may fairly appear each year in one or two questions in Part A; namely, the aim to test the ability of the candidate to apply what he has learned to the solution of an unexpected problem. Such a problem, it is hoped, is that in question 6 of the June paper, or in the second and the third parts of the sixth question in the September paper. The intelligence revealed in answers to such questions is very carefully noted by the examiner and has great weight in helping him to form his decision.

The third part of the paper corresponds to the questions on the study books under the old plan of admission. On the two papers thus far given under the new plan, this third part tests, first, the ability of the student to make a clear summary of a passage of poetry just after he has read it (it is not assumed that he has ever seen this passage of poetry before); second, his ability to distinguish between entirely different tones in poetry and to know why he likes one more than another; third, his ability to recognize (as in the fourteenth question of the June paper) the plain hall-marks of important periods in the history of English literature; and fourth, his ability to explain some of the phrases which have become a part of the common knowledge of reading and thinking people.

It is to be hoped that in the consideration and discussion of this new plan we may not forget that by "requirements" in English should be meant not certain books, but certain kinds and degrees of attainment. Those who have charge of the examinations for admission to Harvard, and particularly those who have charge of the preparation and reading of the examination for admission in English, will be very grateful for comments of any kind from teachers of English or others who have opinions about the new plan. Their gratitude will be warmest, however, to those who will be good enough to bear in mind the point made just above; namely, that it is most desirable to come to some sort of agreement upon the kinds and the degrees of capacity that may reasonably be expected of those who take this examination. After we have put our minds to that, it should not be particularly difficult to choose books adapted to develop and test such powers.

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EDITORIAL

THE POLICY OF THE "ENGLISH JOURNAL"

To those who have read the numbers of the *English Journal* which have thus far been issued, the policy of the magazine must be tolerably clear. Since, however, desire always outruns accomplishment it seems worth while to set forth briefly the purposes we have in view.

First of all, the *Journal* would be representative. It would give voice to teachers in all sorts of schools in all sections of the country. We believe that each has some portion of the truth and that wholeness is to be attained only by putting together the contributions which all can make. We believe, too, that English teachers are greatly in need of coming to a good understanding, more in need of this probably than any other group. The *English Journal* has a very great opportunity in this connection inasmuch as it is the organ of the National Council, which is rapidly becoming a sort of federation of local associations. Hence the *Journal* may serve as a clearing-house of opinion, experience, and investigation. It will attempt to assist every movement which gives promise of improving the conditions of the workers or of increasing the effectiveness of the work.

In the second place, the *Journal* is progressive. We do not wish to root out, tear up, and overthrow, but we are eager to move steadily forward. The *Journal* does not worship at the shrine of tradition; it does not prize school practices merely because they are old. Social conditions change and schools must change with them. Nevertheless we believe in sound methods of investigation and of testing. The American educational world is at present quite too much of a mob, ready to crowd after any leader sufficiently stentorian. After all, the burden of proof rests upon the new.

In the third place, the *Journal* aims at a high standard of excellence in style and typography. There is no good reason why educational articles should not be clear, easy, forceful, and

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suggestive. Teachers of English, certainly, should be able and willing to present their ideas in a readable and effective manner. Mechanically the magazine is as nearly perfect as possible. We believe it will bear comparison with the standard periodicals in this respect.

The cordial reception with which the *Journal* has met is most reassuring. It has already readers in all the states but four, and it has received a very large number of expressions of hearty approval. Everyone seems to understand that the enterprise is strictly an educational one, dependent entirely upon the support of interested teachers. We hope that our friends will continue to use every opportunity to call attention to the magazine and to the cause which it is endeavoring to promote.

THE MASTER'S THESIS

There is a tradition that a student for the Master's degree must present a thesis which shall be a contribution to knowledge. Each year scores of students in scores of colleges compile and collaborate such contributions to knowledge—all of which are surreptitiously destroyed, or solemnly deposited in the black-holes of our libraries. Not infrequently new facts are embodied in these productions, just as not infrequently new designs appear in children's copy-books. Does anyone really believe, however, that one in a hundred of these Master's theses is, in any worthy sense, a "contribution to knowledge"? Why then should we not cease to call them such? And what is vastly more important, why should we not frankly assign subjects for Master's theses—if they *must* be written—solely with the aim of giving to each individual student the most profitable task that we can devise, wholly ignoring the "contribution to knowledge" fetish?

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THE ROUND TABLE

SOME PROBLEMS OF GRAMMATICAL TERMINOLOGY

Every teacher of language must be intensely interested in the work of the Committee on Uniform Grammatical Terminology. So vital is it that our chaotic grammatical nomenclature be reduced to some order that no one will desire to hinder the committee by urging his own preference for certain terms. On the other hand, so far reaching and permanent, we trust, will be the results of the investigation that no person who is considering the subject for himself can escape the responsibility of discussion. I therefore submit the following comments on the report of the committee appointed by the New York City High School Teachers of English, as published in the April number of the *English Journal.*

1. Is it wise to settle on the term *possessive* case? It would probably cover most of the examples presented in an elementary grammar class; but as the student advances he will meet such expressions as "a week's visit," "Tuesday's lesson," "ten cents' worth of sugar," and he will observe that *'s* is used to express other notions than the possessive. Will it not be simpler to teach him at the very beginning of his formal study of grammar that inflectional *'s* is a sign of the *genitive* case? Moreover, parallel forms and constructions in German and Latin he must soon learn to call *genitives*. If we adopt the term *possessive*, are we hastening or delaying the longed-for day when our linguistic studies shall designate identical constructions by the same names?

3. Is not the term *independent by direct address* rather long and clumsy? What is the objection to the word *vocative*, which the children may readily connect with *vocation*, "a calling," and which some of them will need a little later in Latin? And is it wise to use both *independent* (3, 4) and *absolute* (2)? Would it not be better to choose one or the other?

8. Is it not worth while to retain *predicate noun* and *predicate adjective* beside the more general *subjective complement?* The last is an extremely useful term when one wishes to name the construction without calling attention to the part of speech. The first two are more concise when it is desirable to mention both construction and part of speech.

10. Should we use the name *retained object*, or any other with that meaning? Smith, *Studies in English Syntax*, pp. 66 f., explains the

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construction historically in such a way as would seem to make impossible any of the terms ordinarily suggested by grammarians.

15. *Strong* and *weak* are the time honored names for the two verb classes in all Teutonic languages. The use of them in English grammar is so natural that the burden of proving them undesirable would seem to rest with the person who objects to their use in English. It may be urged that they are not in the least descriptive; and they are not. But will the terms *regular* and *irregular* seem more descriptive to the child who is trying to classify *sell, think, feed, set, leave?* Moreover, is there not a wrong suggestion in the word *irregular*, "not conforming to rule"? Strong verbs are just as regular as weak ones; there was one rule for the formation of the strong past, another for the formation of the weak past. Is there not danger here of teaching, or at least suggesting, something that must be unlearned later if the child ever becomes a scholar? And even if he is never to become a scholar, should we not just as carefully avoid suggesting what is false or unscientific? The names *strong* and *weak* may not be the best that might have been chosen, but they seem firmly fixed in the terminology of all the Teutonic grammars—High German, Low German, Gothic, the various Scandinavian dialects. Is it not prudent for English to conform to a custom which would seem unchangeable? Shall we insist on standing aloof in this respect from all the other languages of our group?

Under the classes of the various parts of speech why omit *descriptive adjectives*, by far the largest class? And are not the *indefinite pronouns* as important and as large a group as some of the other classes—for example, the *relative adjectives*—mentioned in this section of the report?

Personally, I should be glad to hear more discussion on these topics, all of which have been sources of anxiety to me in my own teaching.

ALMA BLOUNT

STATE NORMAL COLLEGE
YPSILANTI, MICH.

SHALL THE LAST BE FIRST?

Are we warranted in teaching as sweepingly as we do teach it the principle that the conclusion of a theme is the place of greatest emphasis, and as such should be or contain a summary—or to state the principle itself a little less sweepingly, that the summary or fact of greatest importance should, for the sake of emphasis, always come at the end?

Several things have led me to doubt it. First, I have found myself driven, in the disciplinary or drill part of my teaching of composition,

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to do just the opposite. Troubled with the rambling and aimless sort of paper that all teachers know, I sought a means of bringing my students to realize the gist of their thought before they began to write, and I observed that frequently the student's attempt at a summary really stood for his first clear perception of his thought. The solution of my problem was at hand. I began to require a one-sentence summary of the thought at the head of every composition. The summary had to be written before the composition was set down. From that time, incoherent arrangement and lack of unity ceased being major faults, except in the work of beginners. So helpful did I find the method that I built up a full year's course of Freshman composition on it. (I found this successful too. I printed a manual and had it tried by my assistants; and finding the method successful in their hands also, placed the book for publication.) We are little troubled now by the need of revising the end of themes; the conclusion usually takes care of itself.

Second, I observed the close correspondence of this method with the method of the good news-writer of the newspaper and magazine press. The despatches of the Associated Press illustrate this news method. The reports are so written that the first paragraph tells the whole story; so that a paper printing only that paragraph has given the essential news. Papers that use more of a report do so merely for the interest of the amplification that makes up the rest of the article. Many papers use very full "stories." Yet these accounts do not lose interest as they proceed. This being so, one must concede that the law of climax seems by no means so general as we have been taught to regard it; there are many instances in which the writer will find it not only safe, but indeed desirable, to begin with the facts of greatest interest and work down.

A third consideration that has led me to hesitate about proclaiming the law of climax and the principle of closing summary so absolutely before my students is this: a common obstacle to clearness in expository writing, even by mature writers, is the bringing forward of particulars without having yet indicated what these particulars are supposed to illustrate or demonstrate. Often, of course, this is the natural result, even though unfortunate, of a tendency to inductive thinking. But as the fault may readily be confirmed and cultivated by insistence on the law of climax and the principle of a closing summary, I do not insist. In fact, I do more than refrain. I tell my men positively to outline their exposition at the very first, unless there be a special reason for waiting. And once more I think that the result has been happy.

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In short, my observation and experience have brought me into serious questioning, whether through a too ready acceptance of convenient generalization we have not to some extent gone astray. Is there sufficient fact behind the *always* in our dictum, that "the end is always the place of greatest emphasis"? Are there not many times when, for emphasis as well as interest, the last should be first?

ROBERT WILSON NEAL

MASSACHUSETTS AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE
AMHERST, MASS.

To the Editor of the "English Journal":

It's strange, isn't it, that the fables of Bidpai should be so broadly scattered about the country? Yet such is the case. A section of the MS reported by Mr. Fletcher in the April number of the *Journal* has come to light in this state. The interest already centered in these fables will probably make this MS acceptable to your readers.

Very truly yours,

D. D. PEELE

COLUMBIA COLLEGE, S.C.
April 29, 1912

A SECOND SECTION OF "ANOTHER FABLE OF BIDPAI"

The owners, unwilling to do an injustice to either class of birds, consulted experts. The matter was carefully considered, and an opinion was given that was intended to offend no one. The chickens and the song-birds were to have equal opportunities. Said the experts, "This is a democratic estate. No favoritism must be shown. All must be trained alike; then no one can complain. The song-birds need the sympathy for the chickens that can come only from learning the science of pecking and scratching, and the chickens will appreciate the songs of the above-ground birds after they have discovered some of the difficulties of singing." The advice of the experts was thought good, and the owners set supervisors over the tutors to see that the suggestion was enforced.

Now there were certain birds that could swim easily, and others suffered if only their feet were wet; some flew into the tree tops, others could scarcely leave the ground; some scratched in the ground for food, others caught insects in the air or pecked them from dead tree trunks; some sang in the morning, some in the evening, and a few at night, and others could only quack; and various birds slept at different hours of the day. Under the direction of the supervisors, nevertheless, the tutors grouped their pupils on the broad basis of "birds" and proceeded to instruct them in all the activities of that varied class of created things.

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In early morning the class in scratching was called. Much to the surprise of the tutor in that department, the tall, long-legged birds were stupid and required fearful discipline, which, however, proved futile. Others with sharp claws turned upon their fellow-pupils and would have rent them had they not been imprisoned for insubordination. In a similar manner there was trouble throughout the whole day; no class was satisfactory. In the singing recitation pandemonium reigned; the nightingale was so annoyed by the discords of the goose that she refused to remain in class. Many birds shocked the community by refusing to attend the class in bathing. It soon became customary for only the best pupils in the various departments to attend recitation, and the tutors saw that they were held in contempt by the majority of the birds.

Affairs dragged along at this rate for a few months. The supervisors were informed of the situation, and they made vain efforts to overcome the disorganized condition of instruction on the estate. Finally the owners were appealed to. Upon the advice of their experts they issued an edict that all birds who did not attend all classes and obey the tutors should lose their lives. The mutiny ceased, and affairs improved. All birds seriously tried to perform all the duties required of them. The entire countryside by this time had become interested in the estate. An amused crowd watched the work of the tutors. When the hen tried to crow and the cock took lessons in hatching a brood, a prolonged peal of laughter echoed among the hills and greatly angered the tutors, who were conscientious men seriously trying to do their duty. But a more serious condition was settling upon the school of birds upon this estate. The pupils began to die very rapidly. The lessons in bathing were proving fatal to some of the most promising birdlings; others, taken to the tree tops by the tutor of flying, fell, and were killed. Still others died as the result of certain departments of study, and within a month all that were remaining succumbed to a nervous exhaustion that ended fatally.

The owners of the estate became enraged, discharged all the tutors and supervisors, and imprisoned the experts on a charge of imposition. The estate was . . . . (MS is wanting).

To the Editor of the "English Journal":

The inclosed clipping from the *Boston Transcript* embodies, to some extent, my views on certain phases of compulsory English. I did not write the letter, but I approve of most of it.

FREDERIC ALLISON TUPPER

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A few days since I was talking about books and reading with a number of boys—young men I might call them, for their average age was eighteen—who were preparing for college or the M.I.T. It was hardly a surprise to find them, one and all, expressing a lack of interest in the authors in the English literature course they had studied, in fact, that a distaste for them existed. Milton they never wanted to see again; certain plays of Shakespeare they certainly should never read again, and thought they never should care to read, or see on the stage, any of them; and as for George Eliot and Thackeray—bah!—they were nauseated.

What does this mean? It seems to me to indicate what I have long felt, that the requirements in English literature for admission to college in our preparatory schools are of more than doubtful value, and for these reasons:

1. The immaturity of the pupils. The average boy-mind, the mind of the boy of sixteen to eighteen, has not yet its adult development in appreciation of the higher and finer thought and flights of imagination. It is in the period which the study of the elementary mathematics and the ancient languages befits. It is the period for which the strict logic of mathematics is appropriate, and the careful weighing of words, discrimination of their meanings, and the exercise of the sense of what is true and beautiful in what is expressed by them, developing quickness and sharpness of apprehension, the judgment and imagination which the study of Latin and Greek promotes more than any other. It is only such extraordinary boy-minds as those of a Macaulay or Leslie Stephen that the work is appropriate for.

2. The unfitness of teachers. The work is generally in the hands of assistant teachers—young men or young women who have themselves had no broad reading or culture. Need it be said that it is beyond possibility in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred for them to induct their pupils into the fine thought, the hidden meaning, of such a poem as Browning's *Saul* (mentioned by one of my boys), or what is meant by such a story as *Henry Esmond*, or *Silas Marner?* The impropriety is not so much the fault of the teachers. They may be able and skilful, but time has not yet played its part with either them or their pupils.

3. The distaste for an author which has been made the subject of task-work. This, as already indicated, was brought out in the case of each of the boys. It is curious—perhaps hardly explainable—but the fact is, that a boy who has been given the task of reading attentively, making an analysis, and noting the beauties of, say, the simplest poem of Wordsworth, begets a mental nausea which prevents him from ever looking at Wordsworth again.

The conclusion, to my mind, is this: Let the colleges cease to require preparation in English literature, and in college let the instruction be given into the hands of one who can inspire, and not put to death, a love for the best books. In fact, I believe that the best, and all, the instruction in literature needed could be given to a class in an hour by an inspiring instructor in a talk on books and reading—such as I myself had; who said that all the books a man really needed were three, the Bible, Milton, and Shakespeare.

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NEWS AND NOTES

MEMPHIS FOLLOWS SUIT

On April 22 the English teachers of the Central High School of Memphis, Tenn., organized an association to which principals and eighth-grade teachers as well as high-school teachers are eligible. The association applied at once for membership in the National Council, and the secretary, Miss Mary V. Little, writes most earnestly of the interest of the members in the new movement and of their appreciation of the *English Journal*.

THE MISSOURI MEETING

The eleventh semiannual meeting of the Missouri Society of Teachers of English and Modern Languages was held May 4 at Columbia. The program for the English Section was a general discussion of the question: How can the university and the secondary school be of more help to each other? The speakers from the secondary schools were Dr. Clarence Stratton, Central High School, St. Louis, Miss Erma R. Bishop, Jefferson City, R. B. Miller, Soldan High School, St. Louis, and Miss Josephine Norville, Chillicothe. The speakers from universities were John B. Lowes, Washington University, St. Louis, and H. M. Belden, A. H. R. Fairchild, and Raymond D. Miller, of the University of Missouri.

The officers elected are: *President*, C. B. Goddard, Yeatman High School, St. Louis; *Vice-President*, English Division, E. R. Barrett, State Normal School, Kirksville; *Vice-President*, German Division, J. D. Radke, Manual Training High School, Kansas City; *Vice-President*, Romance Division, Charles Collins, Soldan High School, St. Louis; *Secretary-Treasurer*, V. C. Coulter, State Normal School, Warrensburg. The society voted to affiliate with the National Council.

ALABAMA

The English teachers of Alabama met at Birmingham, April 5, in connection with the State Teachers' Association. The following papers were read: The Teaching of English as a Character-forming Agency," by W. A. Sutton, of the Clay County High School at Ashland; "An Outline of the High-School Course in Literature and Composition," by

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R. C. Johnston, of Huntsville; "To What Extent Should the Course in English Make Use of Pupils' Reading?" by Miss Lillian Odom, of Decatur; "Books and Periodicals That Will Help the English Teacher," by J. W. Simpson, of Ensley. These were followed by five-minute talks on "Theme Criticism," by C. C. Certain, of the Central High School of Birmingham; "Encouraging the Reading Habit," by Miss Harriette Brogden, of the Bibb County High School; and "The Place of the History of Literature in the High School," by Miss Jeanette Simpson, of the Florence Normal School.

THE CAMPAIGN IN KANSAS

The Kansas Association is making great strides. The officers are conducting a vigorous campaign, as the following letter, which prefaces a statement of the plans for their next meeting, will indicate:

If you are an English teacher in any school, or a supervisor of English teaching, or in any other way interested in English teaching, please examine this circular carefully, and then come to the aid of the general movement herein explained for bettering the conditions and results of English teaching, by carrying out as many as possible of the suggestions made below. This movement is commanding the attention of the entire country, and Kansas has already had some share in it.

1. Join the Kansas Association of English Teachers, sending name and membership fee to the secretary-treasurer.

2. Subscribe for the *English Journal* at the special members' rate, sending subscription through the secretary-treasurer. The publication of the *Journal* is a part of the general movement referred to; it is the only periodical in its field in the country, and the most valuable and important part of the work done here and in other states will be reported in it. To be a subscriber or to have opportunity to read it will be almost indispensable to all who are interested in the general advancement of English; it will touch the work and interests of all schools, and be open for the discussion of any topic or the presentation of any matter that interests any English teacher.

3. Where individual subscriptions are not offered, arrange if possible to have one copy made available at a school or city library where all teachers may see it. All subscriptions may begin with the January number, insuring files complete from the beginning.

4. Call the matter of this circular, but one copy of which is sent to a place, to the attention of others, teachers or officers, individually, or if there is opportunity, at a general teachers' meeting, so that action on these requests may be as immediate and general as possible. Take especial pains to see that the matter comes to the attention of teachers and supervisors of elementary schools.

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5. Send to the president of the Association as to details of the organization not yet perfected, and as to work that needs first to be done.

6. Send topics for the program of the November meeting of the Association at Topeka (the English Round Table). In particular, name topics relating to one or more of the eight grades, or name teachers or others who can effectively represent any one or more of the grades, selecting their own topics. Please act quickly, addressing the president.

7. Make the November meeting of the Association the largest and most profitable gathering of English teachers ever known in this state, by coming and by seeing that everybody else comes, and by taking an active part in the business to be done and in planning further work to be undertaken.

Don't forget the membership and the *Journal*. Do all you can, and do it as soon as you can, to make the new organization a power for better things.

Yours very sincerely,

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

ENGLISH CONFERENCES AT THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

On Wednesday, July 10, at 9 A.M., the English Round Table of the Department of Secondary Education will meet to consider "Ways and Means of Increasing the Effectiveness of Instruction in English Composition." The topics and speakers will be as follows: (*a*) "Vocational Themes," Jesse B. Davis, principal of the Central High School, Grand Rapids, Mich.; (*b*) "Oral Work," Eleanor Sheldon, State Normal School, Oshkosh, Wis., Mary E. Courtenay, Englewood High School, Chicago; (*c*) "Laboratory Periods," Samuel E. Conybeare, Washington High School, Grand Rapids, Ia.

On Thurdsay, July 11, at 9:30 A.M., a special joint session of the Departments of Higher Education, Normal Schools, and Secondary Education will be held. The general topic will be "The Significance of Recent Investigations in the Field of English." Edwin M. Hopkins, of the University of Kansas, will present the latest results of his investigation of the labor of theme-reading. He will be followed by Harry G. Paul, of the University of Illinois, and John M. Clapp, of Lake Forest College, on "Methods of Amelioration." James F. Hosic, of the Chicago Teachers College will report "Progress in Articulating School and College," and Vincil C. Coulter, of Warrensburg (Mo.) Normal School, will present pertinent facts concerning "Equipment for School and College Work in English." The conference will close with a discussion of current investigations, their methods and value.

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THE DARTMOUTH CONFERENCE

For several years Dartmouth College has followed the custom of holding annually a conference of the college department and the secondary schools of New Hampshire and bordering states.

The general topic for discussion has varied from year to year, beginning in May, 1901, with English. After ten successive conferences on various branches, the college held on May 16, 17, and 18, 1912, its second discussion of the general subject of English teaching.

A glance at the program which is summarized below indicates the breadth and thoroughness of the work accomplished. The spirit of friendly co-operation and helpfulness was the dominant tone of the conference. And this was created, not merely in the convention hall, but in the social mingling which Professor Emery and the other members of the English department encouraged.

The principal addresses of the conference were as follows: "Public Speaking in the Secondary School," John W. Wetzel, Yale University; "Debating in the Secondary School," James A. Winans, Cornell University; "Relative Emphasis upon Composition and Literature in Secondary-School Teaching," James Tufts, Phillips Academy, Exeter; "The College Entrance Requirements in English," Charles Swain Thomas, Newton, Mass.; "The Necessity of Elementary Correctness," Fred A. Smart, Tilton Seminary; "Poetry in the High School," Curtis H. Page; "Shakespeare in the High School," Earl L. Bradsher. Professor C. W. Winchester of Wesleyan University lectured in the evening on "The English Lakes and Their Poets."

THE NEW JERSEY ASSOCIATION

The second meeting of the Association of Teachers of English of New Jersey was held May 18 in the Newark Library building, with seventy-five members present. The speaker of the day was State Commissioner Calvin N. Kendall, who addressed the teachers on the demands made upon English teachers, their needs, and certain methods of instruction. He touched upon the restricted conditions under which English teachers work, their obligations in teaching literature, their attitude toward periodical literature and the stage, some essentials in composition, and the independence they should maintain in considering their pupils' needs, rather than the demands of college entrance. His address was listened to with the greatest interest, for it was evident

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that the State Commissioner had strong sympathy for the English teacher, and live convictions as to what should be done.

Reports from the Committees on Membership, Uniform Grammatical Nomenclature, and Conditions of Teaching were read and discussed. The first one has on hand a vigorous campaign for members; the second presented a sensible schedule of uniformity to be acted upon later, and the third also has in mind extensive plans for collecting all data available to make clear to all the teachers of the state the conditions under which all are working, and propositions for improving them.

Mr. David Magie's resignation from the Executive Committee was accepted, and Mr. C. H. Raymond, of the Lawrenceville School, was elected in his place. The association likewise voted unanimously to become collective members of the National Council, making the *English Journal* its organ. They realize the importance of the place and work of the Council, approve of its policies, and feel that they want some share in its proceedings.

After transacting some matters of minor importance, the meeting adjourned—a most interesting and enthusiastic occasion.

J. Milnor Dorey

Trenton, N.J.

The meetings of the Library Section of the National Education Association will comprise two morning sessions held Monday, July 8, and Thursday, July 11, and a round table, to be held Friday afternoon, July 12. Mr. Legler, of the Chicago Public Library, will address the Monday morning session on "Affiliation of Library and School." The representative of the American Library Association, Mr. Bostwick, of the St. Louis Public Library, will speak at one of the general evening sessions, and at the Thursday morning meeting. The round table, Friday afternoon, will be an informal meeting. Such topics as "Courses in Children's Literature," "Cultural and Inspirational Reading for High-School Pupils," "Instruction in Use of Books and Libraries," "Debate Work," "Use of Newspapers and Periodicals," "Care of Such Material as Farmers' Bulletins, Pictures, Clippings, Postal Card Collections, Lantern Slides, etc.," "How the Library Can Aid in the Choice of a Vocation," will be discussed. An exhibit of material interesting to both teachers and librarians is being arranged. Important committee reports will be read. Miss J. A. Hopkins will give an account of the new course in library methods for teachers to be offered at Pratt Institute next year. All the meetings will be held at the Chicago Public Library.

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IS IT WORTH THE COST?

The report of the Committee on Composition, of which Professor Hopkins is chairman, has passed into the ninth edition. Copies of the report have been distributed in most of the North Central states and in New England, and interest in the investigation is increasing. According to the figures so far obtained, the annual teaching cost of English for each pupil as compared with other subjects is as follows: English about seven dollars a year; mathematics, 10 per cent more; German, 25 per cent more; history a trifle less; Latin, 40 per cent more; science about 100 per cent more. The average number of pupils to a teacher is in English 130; in mathematics, 115; in history, 130; in German, 86; in Latin, 96; in science, 77. The equipment for science costs about ten times as much for each pupil as in the case of English. If the number of English teachers in the schools were doubled, the pro rata cost of instruction would still be much less than for science. The committee ask very pertinently whether the value of science instruction is so great and that of English so small that this disparity is justified, or whether English should not be recognized at once for what it is, a laboratory subject, and be provided with adequate equipment and teaching force.

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REVIEWS

LYRICAL FORMS IN ENGLISH

It is becoming more and more the custom for experienced teachers of the secondary schools to prepare the textbooks primarily intended for use in such schools. In both England and America the teachers and schools are demanding that those directly interested and immediately engaged in high-school work prepare the high-school texts. A notable example of the modern type of literary text is the little volume just published by the Cambridge Press, entitled *Lyrical Forms in English*,[1] edited with introduction and critical and pedagogical apparatus by Norman Hepple, English master at Gateshead Secondary School, England.

The chief value to students and teachers alike in this new collection of lyrical verse is the definite aim and the specific arrangement of material so as to lead to a more thorough study of literary form and of suggestive lyrical quality. The old idea of elegant extracts is condemned outright, and the barren method of study of mere literary history and biographical facts about authors is strongly objected to. The apparatus for the study of the lyric as a distinct literary form is presented in a general introduction on the history, qualities, and forms of the lyric, and the material is arranged under five distinct divisions, each of which is preceded by an appropriate introduction. These five divisions are the song-lyric, the sonnet, the ode, the idyl, and the elegy. The poems selected under each division are arranged chronologically for comparison and historical reference. The notes appended are not numerous, but they are always helpful and suggestive.

Any lyrical collection will naturally suggest a comparison with Palgrave's famous *Golden Treasury*. About 45 per cent of the selections in Mr. Hepple's volume are also found in Palgrave. This is naturally to be expected, on account of both the wide range and the select quality of the Palgrave collection. The differences from Palgrave, then, are more interesting than the resemblances. In the first place, Hepple reaches back a century or more farther into mediaeval literature and chooses four anonymous folk-lyrics from the collection of *Early English*

[1] *Lyrical Forms in English*. By NORMAN HEPPLE. New York: Putnam, 1912.

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Lyrics edited by Chambers and Sidgwick, including the famous "Cockoo Song" beginning "Somer is ycomen in." The other distinct difference from Palgrave is at the other end of the line, namely, in the lyrics of later writers. It is well known that Palgrave's chief adviser in his final selection of lyrics to include in his volume was the poet laureate, Lord Tennyson, and it was a source of keen regret to the editor not to be able to include in his *Golden Treasury* a single poem of his distinguished mentor. Mr. Hepple has not excluded living writers from his collection, and he has the advantage over Palgrave of the inclusion of many poems from the hands of poets who have died since Palgrave's work came out. In addition, a few American poets are included. Poe is represented by "The Bells," Longfellow by "The Rainy Day" and two sonnets, Bryant by "To a Water-Fowl," Lowell by "A June Day" from *The Vision of Sir Launfal*, and Bret Harte by "What the Bullet Sang." To many American readers this meager selection will seem but a small sop, but when we consider the purpose of the collection, the desire of the author to secure representative selections of the whole range of the lyric, and the distinct limitation of the interests of the English secondary-school student, criticism is silenced.

L. W. Payne, Jr.

The University of Texas
Austin, Tex.

BUSINESS ENGLISH

Business English. By Edwin Herbert Lewis, Ph.D., LL.D., Professor of English, Lewis Institute, Chicago. Chicago: Published by LaSalle Extension University, 1911. Pp. 287.

This is a lively book on a live subject. Its style, which is as characteristic as that of the *Compleat Angler*, will reconcile scholars to the task of teaching business English, if anything will; their interest in its subject-matter, on the other hand, may lead many business men and business women unconsciously if not consciously to acquire a feeling for artistic expression. Those who know Dr. Lewis will not be much surprised to find that the work is that of a scholar and a wit, but they may not expect to find in the book the wealth of solid practical matter which it contains. Both elements are here and it is a happy union.

We have always supposed that there are only two kinds of English, good English and bad English. We are happy to be able to announce that Dr. Lewis is apparently of the same opinion. He says in his preface that he has aimed to produce a book which should take into consideration the best standards and scholarship of college teaching and

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apply the established principles of composition to the special problems of business, with due reference to the vocabularies of commerce and commercial law. Written originally for college men who were beginning their studies in engineering, the text has been somewhat simplified with the idea of making it serviceable in the third and fourth years of technical and commercial high schools, in business colleges, and in correspondence work. To the writer of this review it seems possible that it might with profit be used in academic high schools also, say in the third or fourth year. Business interests, as Dr. Lewis says, are stronger in most boys than most teachers appreciate and due consideration of them will often arouse constructive power in minds which respond to no other stimulus.

Whether the book will be effective or not in high-school classrooms can, however, be determined only by the experiment of actual teaching. For this purpose its organization is apt to prove faulty. Probably there are too many pages devoted to theory and too few to exercises. To put the matter a little differently, it may be that there is too much of the deductive and not enough of the inductive. It will all depend on how far the book arouses the interest of the boy or girl into whose hands it is put. If its subject-matter makes a strong appeal to them, it will matter little what the method or order of topics is; if it does not make a strong appeal, the method and order of topics will not make or mar the usefulness of the book to any appreciable extent.

To students of engineering, however, to young men and women already at work in offices, to mature business men anxious to improve their grasp on the subject of business English, and to all grown-up people who can appreciate a piece of good writing, the book will be at once an inspiration and a delight. We predict that it will become the *vade mecum* of many an ambitious youth. As we have already hinted, it deserves, by reason of its style alone, to be included in libraries along with the *Compleat Angler*. A quotation or two will show what we mean:

"In the phrase *No, price too high* the comma is a signal of danger. Omit it and you have *No price too high*. A California man once wired the former phrase to his agent; the telegraph company omitted the comma; and the error cost the sender some thousands. But the fault was his. Telegraph companies do not contract to transmit punctuation. He should have worded his message so that it would have been punctuation tight."

"The abbreviations *inst.*, *prox.*, *ult.*, may well be relegated to the scrap heap. They are relics of outworn majesty."

"Jas., Chas., Thos., Wm., etc., are permissible, but no man so named ever felt offended to find his name spelled out."

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"If you are going to use slang, use it. Do not strew your pages with apologetic quotation marks. Take the responsibility or else leave the stuff alone. Nothing is gained by coy approaches to vulgarism. It is irritating to see the pages of business magazines peppered with quoted slang. It reminds you of the Frenchman who, when the coach was overturned, stepped out on a lady's head and said, 'By your leave, madam?'"

"A poor-farm is not necessarily a poor farm."

"*Bonus.* Something given in addition to what is strictly due. It is pure Latin, and means 'a good thing'; or rather it is impure Latin, for the strictly correct form would be *bonum.* Slang, you see, may lurk even in Latin."

"'Thanking you in advance' is the trademark of the man of nerve, not of the man of the world."

The book contains 287 pages, of which 207 are devoted to the exposition of the subject, 76 to exercises, and 4 to an index. Among the titles of chapters are: "Definition of Business English," "The Paragraph vs. the Long Sentence"; "Punctuation, an Art"; "The Mastery of the Hyphen"; "The History of Business Words"; "Tone, or Degrees of Dignity"; "Business Narration"; "Business Reports"; "Advertisement English"; "The Business Letter in Detail."

All teachers of English, whether they teach business English or not, should own and study the book. It is replete with concrete suggestions that can be used in the classroom.

EDWIN L. MILLER

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THE INFLUENCE OF THE STUDY OF LATIN ON THE STUDENT'S KNOWLEDGE OF ENGLISH GRAMMAR

CYRUS LAURON HOOPER
Chicago Teachers College

It has always been maintained that the study of Latin has a marked influence on the student's knowledge of English grammar, and incidentally on his skill in composition, at least in so far as his knowledge of sentence-structure is concerned; but, so far as I know, no one has ever undertaken an investigation to determine positively how much truth there is in the assertion. The gradual relegation of the language of Caesar, Cicero, and Vergil to a secondary place in the curriculum of secondary schools, the threat, even, of its final banishment, and the growing belief that the proper teaching of English in the classroom would produce as good results as those obtained by the study of the older tongue, make an investigation of the subject very pertinent at this time. As I work under conditions somewhat favorable to the making of such an investigation, I began, two years ago, to give grammar tests to my classes in the Chicago Teachers College, to tabulate the results, and to make such deductions as seemed reasonable.

Students who enter the college are graduates of the city and parochial high schools. Owing to a certain degree of election in the courses of study which these young people have pursued, some of them have had four years of Latin, some three, some two, some one year, and some none at all. It was easy, therefore, to determine the ability of the five groups; but it must be admitted in the beginning that the variation may be attributable in part to other

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causes than the difference in time devoted to the study of Latin, notably, difference in the ability of individual students, and difference in the ability of their teachers of languages. In addition to these, two other facts must be taken into consideration—that the students who enter in February may represent a larger number of "left-overs" than those who enter in September, and that the total number examined up to this time is not large. The figures given in this paper can, therefore, be taken only as an approximation.

In the tests given, there were two main kinds of questions: first, those that called for the writing of sentences containing certain kinds of constructions; second, those based upon a passage from some book or from *The Chicago Normal School Weekly*, a publication conducted by students. While writing the test, each student had a copy of the book or paper before her, and therefore studied the sentences as they appeared in their context; but for the sake of economy of space, I give only the particular sentences, or parts of sentences, upon which the questions were asked.

The first test was as follows:

1. Write a sentence containing a causal clause.
2. Write a sentence containing a participial phrase.
3. Write a sentence containing a predicate noun.
4. Write a sentence containing a restrictive clause.
5. Write a sentence containing a non-restrictive clause.
6. Explain, in terms of grammar, the use of the first comma in "Miss Wells, Miss Russell, Mr. Ashley, and Mr. Shepherd, our class advisers, were present."
7. Explain, in terms of grammar, the use of the first comma in "Mr. Owen, who, as he himself expressed it, had, etc."
8. Explain, in terms of grammar, why there is no comma after "those" in "A motion was made to the effect that we have no quorum, and that those who are interested enough to come, will do so."
9. Give the construction of the clause beginning with "that" in "A motion was finally made and seconded that we pay the required sum out of the class treasury."
10. Give the construction of "to investigate" in "Then followed a report of the committee appointed to investigate the 'technicalities and legalities' of the minutes of the meeting."

There follows a tabulation of the results of the test, showing the grade of each student, the average value of the answers to each question (changed from a scale of 10 to a scale of 100), and the

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TABLE I

FOUR-YEAR GROUP

	Question No.										Grade
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
A	10	10	10	8	10	10	0	0	5	10	73
B	10	10	10	10	10	10	0	0	5	5	70
C	10	10	5	0	0	10	0	0	5	10	50
D	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	100
E	10	10	10	0	0	10	0	0	10	5	55
F	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
Averages	83.3	83.3	91.7	46.6	50	83.3	16.6	16.6	58.3	66.6	
Average of group	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	59.7

THREE-YEAR GROUP

A	10	8	10	5	0	10	10	0	5	10	68

TWO-YEAR GROUP

A	10	0	10	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	30
B	10	8	5	0	0	5	0	0	5	5	38
C	8	8	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	10	36
D	10	5	10	8	0	10	0	0	5	0	48
E	10	10	10	0	0	10	0	0	10	7	57
F	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	5	95
G	10	10	0	0	0	10	0	0	5	5	40
H	10	10	10	10	0	10	10	10	10	10	90
I	10	10	0	10	0	10	0	10	10	5	65
J	8	8	8	10	0	10	5	10	5	5	69
K	10	10	10	0	0	10	5	5	5	10	65
L	10	10	0	10	8	8	5	0	5	5	61
M	10	10	10	10	10	7	10	10	5	10	92
Averages	96.9	83.8	63.8	60	21.5	84.6	34.6	42.3	57.7	59.2	
Average of group	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	60.5

ONE-YEAR GROUP

A	10	10	10	8	0	10	10	0	5	0	63

NO-LATIN GROUP

A	10	0	10	0	0	10	0	8	5	8	51
B	10	10	10	10	0	0	5	10	7	7	69
C	10	10	10	5	0	10	5	0	0	5	55
D	10	10	10	10	0	0	10	10	5	0	65
E	10	10	10	0	0	10	0	0	0	5	45
F	10	10	0	5	8	10	0	0	5	0	48
G	10	0	10	0	0	10	0	0	0	10	40
H	0	10	0	0	0	10	5	0	0	0	25
Averages	87.5	75	75	37.5	10	75	31.2	35	27.5	43.7	
Average of group	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	49.7

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average of each group. The capital letters, A, B, C, etc., are used instead of the names of the students.

In this test we shall have to disregard those students who have had three years of Latin, and those who have had one, since there was but one of each; but the other groups are sufficiently large for comment. The failure of the four-year students to surpass the two-year students is at once seen, and is plainly due to the presence of an exceptionally weak student in the first of these groups. After four years of the study of Latin, she made a grade of 10 on a scale of 100, in a simple test in English grammar. That hers was an exceptional case is shown by the fact that she was the only one in her group that ranked lower than 50, while of the thirteen students in the two-year group five were below 50. If her paper be disregarded, the average of the group rises to 69.6.

However, the average must be accepted as it stands—59.7, a little lower than that made by the two-year students, and about ten points higher than the average of those who had no Latin at all. So far, then, as this test is concerned, the advantage of Latin over no Latin is easily apparent. It is worthy of being noted that four students of the no-Latin group had studied German four years, two had studied it three years, and one two years. It is interesting to record, too, that the three highest grades in the group were made by students who had had German four years. All students in all groups had, of course, studied English grammar in some way or other either in the elementary or high schools, or in both.

Some interesting facts may be noted in relation to the difference between the averages of the answers to the different questions. The grades of the first three questions, which called for the writing of isolated sentences, were high, which shows that the questions were easy, and also, perhaps, that the writing of isolated sentences to illustrate principles of grammar was an accustomed thing. The fourth and fifth questions were graded low; high-school graduates find the difference between restrictive and non-restrictive constructions too elusive for their comprehension. Questions 7 and 8 were doubly difficult, apparently, for not only was it necessary for the student to understand the difficulty just mentioned, but she must also explain the application of a grammatical principle to one phase

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of the technique of composition, namely, punctuation. The latter difficulty seems even greater than the former, for the training of the schools usually fits boys and girls to deal with isolated sentences illustrating principles of grammar, but does not train them to settle questions of punctuation, of accuracy of expression, and variety in length and structure of sentences in their own composition and that of others.

The first test was given to students who had just entered the college; the following one was given to an advanced class, which had had its regular course in English I, in which there had been, doubtless, some grammar incidental to work in composition. The questions were as follows:

1. What kind of sentence, as to form, is the following? "An important meeting held last Thursday was sparsely attended; the people interested declared that they did not see the notice announcing the meeting."

2. Give the construction of the clause beginning with "that," in the sentence quoted in the preceding question.

3. What kind of clause is in "the persons who were wanted by teachers"?

4. What part of speech is "concerning," in "official bulletins concerning plans."

5. What is the subject in "Nor is it strange that in our present unsystematized arrangement, many important notices are not seen"?

6. State, in terms of grammar, why there is a semicolon in "Classification is not impossible; material may be classified according to the immediacy of its appeal to the student body."

7. State, in terms of grammar, why there is no comma after "things" in "For example, if things that are of immediate importance, etc."

8. What is the construction of "There" in "There is never a time in the day when the hands of the clock turn around so fast as they do between the rising hour and the time to start to school"?

9. Give the construction of "when" in the sentence quoted in the previous question.

10. Give the construction of "keeping" in "When one goes to the dentist, one finds that there are little weights holding back the hands and keeping one in the chair."

The results of the test appear in Table II.

In this test a startling difference appears between the grades of those who had studied Latin four years and those who had not studied it at all—nearly 30 per cent. The two-year group

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TABLE II

Four-Year Group

	Question No.										Grade
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
A	10	10	5	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	95
B	10	0	5	5	0	0	0	0	5	5	30
C	10	10	5	10	0	10	10	0	10	10	75
D	10	10	10	5	0	10	10	0	0	0	55
E	10	10	10	5	0	10	0	5	10	10	70
F	10	10	10	5	10	5	5	10	0	10	75
Averages	100	83.3	75	66.6	33.3	75	58.3	41.6	58.3	75	
Average of group	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	66.6

Three-Year Group

A	10	10	10	5	5	0	0	10	5	10	65
B	10	10	10	0	10	0	10	10	0	0	60
Averages	100	100	100	25	75	0	50	100	25	50	
Average of group	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	62.5

Two-Year Group

A	10	10	10	5	0	10	10	0	5	10	70
B	10	5	10	5	0	10	10	0	0	5	55
C	10	10	10	5	10	0	0	0	10	10	65
D	0	10	0	5	0	0	0	0	5	5	25
E	10	10	5	5	0	0	0	0	5	10	45
F	10	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	25
G	10	10	5	5	0	10	10	0	5	10	65
H	10	0	10	0	5	0	0	10	0	0	35
I	10	5	10	5	0	5	0	0	10	5	50
J	10	10	5	5	5	5	0	0	5	10	55
K	0	5	0	5	0	0	0	0	5	10	25
Averages	81.8	68.2	68.2	40.9	18.2	36.4	27.3	9.1	50	68.2	
Average of group	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	46.8

One-Year Group

A	10	10	10	5	0	0	0	0	5	10	50

No-Latin Group

A	10	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	25
B	10	5	5	10	0	0	0	0	5	0	35
C	0	10	5	5	0	0	0	10	5	0	35
D	10	5	10	0	0	5	10	0	5	0	45
E	10	10	5	5	10	0	0	0	5	5	50
F	10	0	0	5	0	5	10	0	5	0	35
Averages	83.3	50	50	41.7	16.6	16.6	33.3	16.6	50	16.6	
Average of group	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	37.5

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surpassed the no-Latin group by about nine points. The other groups are too small to be considered.

The lowest question-averages appear for Nos. 5 and 8, which concern our troublesome expletive, or anticipatory, construction. Here the four-year group greatly surpassed the others, although there are no words in Latin which have the functions of our expletives, *it* and *there*. The difference is, indeed, so marked that it is not easy to avoid believing that the four-year group had more power of independent thought in matters of syntax than the other groups. The grades for the sixth and seventh questions, which pertain to the application of grammar to punctuation, were also highest in the case of the four-year group.

The following test, based on passages from *The Great Stone Face*, was given to a February class immediately after entering the college:

1. State whether the following sentence is simple, complex, compound, or complex-compound. "One afternoon, when the sun was going down, a mother and her little boy sat at the door of their cottage, talking about the Great Stone Face."

2. In the same sentence, what is the construction of "talking"?

3. Explain, in terms of grammar, why there is a comma after "eyes" in "They had but to lift their eyes, and there it was plainly to be seen, etc."

4. What does "and" join in "Others had their homes in comfortable farm houses, and cultivated the rich soil on the gentle slopes or level surfaces of the valley"?

5. Give the construction of "numerous" in "the inhabitants of this valley, in short, were numerous, etc."

6. Explain, in terms of grammar, why there is a comma after "them" in "But all of them, grown people and children, had a kind of familiarity with the Great Stone Face, etc."

7 In ". . . . formed on the perpendicular side of a mountain by some immense rocks, which had been thrown together in such a position as, when viewed at a proper distance, precisely to resemble the features of a human countenance," is the clause beginning with "which" restrictive or non-restrictive?

8. What does the first "and" join, in "True it is, that if the spectator approached too near, he lost the outline of the gigantic visage, and could discern only a heap of ponderous and gigantic rocks, piled in chaotic ruin one upon another"?

9. In the same sentence, what is the construction of "piled"?

10. Explain the error in grammar in "Retracing his steps, however, the

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wondrous features would again be seen; and the farther he withdrew, the more like a human face, with all its original divinity intact, did they appear."

11. In the same sentence, explain, in terms of grammar, why there is a semicolon after "seen."

12. In the same sentence, what does "and" join?

13. Determine what the subject is in "It was a happy lot for children to grow up to manhood and womanhood with the Great Stone Face before their eyes."

14. Explain, in terms of grammar, why there is a comma after "affections" in . . . . "that embraced all mankind in its affections, and had room for more."

15. Explain, in terms of grammar, why there is a comma after "people" in "According to the belief of many people, the valley owed much of its fertility to the benign aspect that was continually beaming over it."

16. In the same sentence, give the construction of "it."

17. What does the second "and" join, in "As we began with saying, a mother and her little boy sat at their cottage door, gazing at the Great Stone Face, and talking about it"?

18. In ". . . . for it looks so very kindly that its voice must needs be pleasant," what is the construction of the group of words beginning with "that"?

19. In the same sentence, what is the construction of "needs"?

20. Rewrite the following sentence, changing only the part that follows the comma: Having bought a farm, it did not prove profitable.

The tabulation of results appears in Table III, the question-averages being changed from a scale of 5 to a scale of 100.

Again we may disregard those groups that are too small for consideration, although they will, of course, be included in the totals; and we find that those students who had no Latin greatly surpass those who had studied it for two years. There is a possible explanation of this in the fact that February classes are likely to contain more than the usual number of students who had proved weak in high school, and perhaps some that had made more than one attempt to pass the college-entrance examinations. I made no inquiry into this matter, but from a very intimate knowledge of the class I judge that it is no exception to the rule. Along with weak students in the February classes, there are usually a few of the strong ones—those who have not been retarded at any stage of their progress. One of these, in the present instance, was a girl in the no-Latin group who made a grade of 85, the highest of all

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TABLE III

	Question No.																				Grade
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
Four-Year Group																					
A	0	5	5	2	2	0	0	0	4	5	2	5	0	3	5	2	5	1	4	5	55
B	5	3	0	5	0	4	0	0	4	5	2	0	0	0	1	3	5	5	4	5	51
Averages	50	80	50	70	20	40	0	0	80	100	40	50	0	30	60	50	100	60	80	100	
Average of the group	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	53
Three-Year Group																					
A	5	1	5	5	5	3	5	5	4	0	2	4	5	0	5	0	5	1	0	0	60
Two-Year Group																					
A	0	0	0	0	3	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	3	0	15
B	5	2	0	5	2	3	0	5	0	4	2	5	5	0	1	3	5	3	0	0	50
C	5	1	3	5	2	3	0	5	5	5	2	0	2	0	0	3	5	1	4	0	51
D	5	2	0	5	4	5	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	31
E	5	5	5	0	5	5	0	0	5	0	2	5	5	0	2	3	5	3	5	0	60
F	0	2	0	0	2	3	0	0	2	0	2	5	0	0	0	0	5	0	4	0	25
G	5	2	0	5	3	3	0	5	0	4	2	5	5	0	3	3	5	3	0	0	53
Averages	71.4	40	22.8	57.1	60	62.8	14.3	57.1	34.3	37.1	28.6	57.1	48.6	0	17.1	42.8	71.4	45.7	45.7	0	
Average of the group	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	40.7
No-Latin Group																					
A	5	2	3	0	5	1	5	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	5	3	2	3	5	0	43
B	5	2	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	5	0	3	4	3	5	5	5	5	85
C	5	2	5	2	0	1	5	0	0	5	2	0	0	3	3	0	5	0	3	5	46
D	5	0	3	2	1	0	5	5	0	0	2	5	0	5	0	0	5	0	4	5	47
Averages	100	30	80	45	55	35	100	50	35	50	35	50	10	55	60	30	85	40	85	75	
Average of the group	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	55.3

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who took the test. When classes are so uneven in ability, almost any anomaly is likely to occur.

Besides these tests, there was a fourth, also of February students. I need not give the questions, for the lists already given are a sufficient indication of their character. Neither need I give the averages of questions, as these would throw no new light upon the subject. The general averages were as follows: Four-year group, six students, 44.6; three-year group, six students, 45.3; two-year group, five students, 45.4; no-Latin group, two students, 25. There was no one-year group. In this case it was the two-year group that had the exceptional student—a weak one, who made a grade of 4; no other student in the group made a grade of less than 50.

The total results of all the tests were as follows:

Twenty students who had studied Latin four years averaged	56.6
Ten students who had studied Latin three years averaged	52.5
Thirty-six students who had studied Latin two years averaged	50.4
Two students who had studied Latin one year averaged	56.5
Twenty students who had not studied Latin at all averaged	44.7

The first, third, and fifth of these groups are sufficiently large for consideration, and it is readily seen that the four-year group is about twelve points higher than the no-Latin group, and that the two-year group is about six points higher than the no-Latin group. It is probable that the differences would be greater in a more extended investigation, first because February students would not be likely to be so numerous as in this series of tests, and second, because exceptional students cannot be counted upon to appear in the right places to decrease the natural difference. For instance, it is by no means probable that even among a great number of young people who had had four years of Latin, one would make so low a grade as 10; and it is nearly as improbable that one of the no-Latin group would make a grade twenty-five points higher than anyone else who took the test. Yet this very thing happened in the present case. If these two students be eliminated, the difference between the four-year group and the no-Latin group rises from 11.9 to 16.5, which is probably a nearer approximation to the standard.

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There appear to be two reasons for the superiority of those who have had a thorough course in Latin. First, Latin is an inflected language and therefore so different from our own as to make the most minute study of grammer necessary in order to secure good translations. Grammar is, indeed, the only means of translation, except in the case of a few pupils, mainly girls, who seem to grasp the meaning of a Latin sentence by inspiration, but who fail when asked questions of syntax. And since the general principles of grammar are universal, what is learned in Latin is easily transferred to English. The excellent method of Latin instruction is the second reason. The introductory book, to be sure, is similar to English grammars in that principles are taught by means of isolated sentences; but when this book is cast aside or reduced to the rank of reference book, the pupil enters upon a very different manner of study. Now he begins to read Caesar, which means that he must gradually learn to use his knowledge of the principles of Latin grammar in whatever order the old warrior chose to use them; there is no methodical progression, in that old classic on the war in Gaul, from the simple to the complex, from the easy to the difficult; there is no classification of ablatives and periphrastics and supines: but all come quite irrespective of the order in which they were studied in the introductory book, and if the pupil cannot learn to recognize and apply them as they come, he can get no mastery of Latin. After he has had a year of Caesar, a year of Cicero, and a year of Vergil, he has formed the habit of thinking of grammar as something intimately associated with sentences as they stand in the paragraph; and some of this habit naturally transfers to English.

The pedagogical deductions are simple. The pupils in our schools should have either careful training in an inflected language, including careful translation into idiomatic English, or their training in English grammar should be as much as possible after the Latin method of instruction—the constant analysis of sentences as they stand in the paragraph, and always with accuracy of sentence structure, sentence emphasis, variety of length and structure of sentences, and punctuation as the ends to be attained. The student mentioned as exceptional under the discussion of the third test, studied grammar in a manner similar to this; and although

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she had had no Latin, she ranked higher than any other student who took the test, and was twenty-five points higher than the one who made the next to the highest grade.

This method is objected to by some teachers because it seems to place undue emphasis on the formal side of composition. While I admit that my tendency is to do this very thing, I have three arguments to urge in its favor. First, the matter of proportion of emphasis is something that can be cared for mathematically; if one or two days of the week, in the upper grades of the elementary school and in the high school, are devoted to sentence analysis, and the other days to obtaining fulness and freedom of expression, a good proportion will be observed. Second, the method can be followed without producing any more artificiality of style than is incident to the learning of any technique, as that of piano-playing; and this is but temporary. It is my practice to send several students to the blackboard whenever writing is to be done in the class, and to appoint two or three students to act as critics for the writers while the work is in progress. After the themes are completed, the criticism begins with careful consideration of their substance and spirit, and the structure of the paragraphs. After all the work has been discussed from this point of view, two or more are taken up for grammar study, the work lasting, perhaps, several days; sentence after sentence is criticized as to accuracy of expression, accuracy of syntax, variety in length and structure, emphasis, choice of words, effectiveness of phrase, and punctuation. This work is of the character that forms the third point of defense, namely, that any kind of study tends to become more and more intellectual as the student becomes more mature. That many people have failed to get as intellectual a grasp of their own language as they have felt the need of is made evident by such remarks as "I have a sense of what is right, but I don't know why." It is the very unusual person who gets a mastery of English or any other language merely by reading what is good, and from the mere frequency of expressing himself. The majority of mankind can attain a sufficient skill in expression only by a careful linguistic study.

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THE EFFICIENCY OF STUDENT CORRECTION OF COMPOSITIONS[1]

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In the Boys' High School, Brooklyn, N.Y., student correction of compositions is the approved method of solving the theme problem. As systematic student criticism is rare in high schools, an explanation of the plan is necessary. The details of the system vary greatly with individual teachers, but the essential features are uniform throughout the school.

Between the writing of a theme and its criticism and correction, several days intervene. The boy as a result returns to his composition with a slightly changed point of view. The composition has become "cold." His attitude toward it is more critical and impersonal than it was at the time of writing.

At the beginning of the correction period, the boy is given three to five minutes, if the theme covers only one page, to improve his composition. He may erase or cross out mistakes and write in ink the revision. He understands that, in his composition grade, he will receive credit for the improvement made. At the end of the time, the boy, by a letter placed in the upper left corner of the paper, registers his opinion of the worth of his work.

Then the boy's opposite is given five or six minutes in which, by placing suitable symbols or comments in the margin, to indicate detailed errors and to make a general comment on the composition. Opposites are varied frequently. The marking symbols are uniform throughout the school. After the opposite has indicated detailed errors and, perhaps, made a general comment, he places a grade, showing his estimate of the merit of the theme, just under the writer's mark, and puts his name after the grade. All work of opposites is done in lead pencil.

[1] This article is a condensation of a thesis prepared under the direction of Dr. E. L. Thorndike of Columbia University. Because of limited space, the data on which the conclusions are based have been entirely omitted.

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Then comes the most interesting part of the period—eight or ten minutes for conference and correction. Each boy corrects the errors noted and discusses quietly with the one who marked the paper any criticism which he thinks unjust. If he can show his critic that the theme is free from the error indicated, the critic erases the symbol. Disputes which writer and critic cannot decide are referred to the teacher. His decision is final. If the teacher is not able to decide in the time all disputes, the boy writes "disagree" above the symbol to which he objects.

The compositions are again marked by the class critics. This body consists of from three to six of the best English students and most efficient critics in the class. The critics are compensated for the theme-marking by being excused from a part of the written home work. At home, the critic indicates mistakes not detected by the opposite and settles disputes between the writer and the opposite by crossing out either the symbol or the word "disagree." He also puts his estimate of the worth of the theme underneath the two grades already on the paper and his signature after his grade. The critic's work is done in blue pencil.

Finally, the teacher using red pencil checks up the theme, crosses out unjust criticisms, points out errors not previously detected, and changes the rating of the composition if he thinks the critic's grade too high or too low.

To be sure, the teacher varies this plan to suit his convenience. Sometimes, for example, the compositions are first corrected by the class critics and then considered in class.

The obvious advantages of a workable system of student criticism are that it is judgment by peers and that it gives the boy the ability to detect and correct his own mistakes. When a specially trained mature man or woman finds glaring defects in Johnny's writing, Johnny feels no cause for serious alarm. He reasons that the teacher ought to be able to find sins of omission and commission and that he is ambitious really to earn his salary by discovering many and great. But when his opposite, Willie Jones, points out the same mistakes, Johnny's attitude is changed. His personal pride is touched. He vows that he will write compositions which Willie shall find unassailable. Student criticism also

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develops that most important power in English improvement, the ability to detect and correct one's own errors. Each boy learns to test his own work by definite and frequently applied standards. He knows when he has done a piece of good work. He develops a sense of relative values by much practice in judging values and by a comparison of his judgments with those of his classmates and teacher. In practical life, men are rated by their ability to judge values. Student correction prepares for the real life outside. Pupils develop self-expression, self-activity, and initiative and have an opportunity for close personal contact with fellow-pupils and teacher. They get as much personal conference as is possible in high schools with large classes. Moreover, student correction, as a principal phrased it after seeing the work for the first time, "makes the composition period interesting." Boys feel that they are dealing with real, vital human issues.

But with all its virtues, student correction is worthless if it is not efficient, if a school boy is not able to detect the important weaknesses in his own or his fellow's composition. This study was made for the purpose of testing the efficiency of the system, the ability of students in criticism.

The material of the investigation was twenty-five compositions written by the boys themselves during their fourth term of high-school English. These compositions represented the best and the worst of which the class was capable. There were also themes of the fair students.

The class tested numbered thirty-four boys and was English *5d* of Boys' High School, Brooklyn. *English 5d* means that the boys were doing the high-school English of the fifth term (first half of the third year). The class had in it some of the brightest and some of the dullest boys of the fifth term of the school.

To each of the thirty-four boys were given mimeographed copies of the twenty-five compositions. The work was done in class under the writer's supervision. The boys were told to mark the compositions just as they were accustomed to marking the work of their opposites except that they were to indicate the grade of each theme in percentages rather than in letters. The boys marked the themes in successive English periods. A record

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was kept of the time used by each boy in marking the complete set.

These twenty-five themes were criticized and graded also by six experienced English teachers (two men and four women) and by four cultured men who have never taught English. Of the English teachers, one is a teacher of three years' experience in a New York City high school; another is a supervisor of English of ten years' experience in a New York City public school; a third is a Teachers College student who has had several years' experience as an English teacher; the others are from Pennsylvania and Georgia and have had eight, eleven, and fifteen years' experience respectively in English teaching in elementary schools, high schools, and colleges. All are college-trained people, and a number have done graduate work. They form a group which, the writer thinks, averages slightly higher in efficiency than the whole body of English teachers of the country.

To each of these a sheet of marking symbols and typewritten instructions were given with the twenty-five mimeographed themes. The instructions in part were: "Mark the compositions *in the manner* and *in the time* in which you would mark them if you were teaching English and were receiving, perhaps, one hundred or more such compositions each week. Consider 60 per cent the passing grade. Remember that these are fourth-term (second half of second year) high-school compositions."

In tabulating results, the writer first ascertained how many of the total 460 errors on the twenty-five papers each critic discovered, then penalized the critics for symbols placed where no errors existed, and finally rated each error one, two, or three points according to the importance of having it called to the attention of the pupil. He also determined correlations to test the reliability and significance of the measures obtained, totaled the errors discovered according to types, and studied the grades assigned to the compositions and the ability of boys, English teachers, and others in addressing a comment to the boy on the theme as a whole.

The conclusions which may reasonably be drawn from the data obtained are:

1. Fifth-term (first half of third year) high-school boys trained

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in student criticism spend in marking themes approximately twice as much time as the English teacher uses in marking them at his normal rate. The average time spent by the boys in marking each composition was 6.8 minutes; by the English teachers, 3.7 minutes. Boys were told to mark as rapidly as they could with accuracy; English teachers, to mark in the time they would mark the themes if they were the work of the teachers' own classes.

2. Fifth-term high-school boys working as explained above find almost as many errors as English teachers discover. The members of the class average slightly below the English teachers; the six class critics, somewhat above.

3. Fifth-term high-school boys mark as incorrect approximately three times as many examples of divided usage and other expressions in which the English is good as do English teachers. A few boys in a class are almost worthless as critics because, although they find many errors, they mark wrong the correct as well as the incorrect. Even the class critics must be penalized more than twice as much as English teachers for this fault. Perhaps the average for the boys in this study is slightly higher than it would be under normal conditions because of the competitive spirit aroused by the fact that the boys were performing an identical task.

4. When critics are penalized for marking mistakes where none exist and when the errors marked are weighted according to their importance, fifth-term high-school boys show an average efficiency 22 per cent below that of the average English teacher tested. The six class critics average slightly higher in efficiency than the average English teacher. In other words, given sufficient time, the best students in a fifth-term English class will point out errors as well as the average teacher who marks a large number of papers each week.

5. The correlations for reliability arrived at indicate that a boy of good critical ability is likely to stand high in the class in the marking of any given composition. Critical ability is a fairly constant power.

6. The correlations for significance obtained indicate that the good English student is usually an efficient critic; that, with a much lower degree of probability, the boy who averages high in his school subjects is an efficient critic; and that in general the boys

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who spend a longer time on the work are slightly more valuable critics than those who do the work more quickly. The significant finding is that in general the best English students make the most efficient class critics.

7. The results obtained by dividing the errors into types indicate that critics find most surely mistakes in spelling and that misstatements of fact are least frequently detected. The number of mistakes in fact in the compositions, six, is too small to make the latter finding more than a probability. It is significant, however, that not an English teacher marked such statements as, "The boy who keeps his body healthy always knows his lessons better than the one who is careless about his health," and "I should go out for the football team because I am five feet ten inches tall and weigh one hundred pounds." Boys and educated men mark such misstatements more frequently than English teachers discover them. Boys are comparatively weak in detecting mistakes in diction but rank high in marking mistakes in capitalization and unnecessary repetition of words or ideas. In detecting faulty paragraph structure, fifth-term boys are somewhat inferior to the average English teacher tested. The difference between boys and English teachers in errors of this type is less than 10 per cent greater than the difference for mistakes of all types. In other words, boys learn to discover defects in paragraph structure almost as well as mistakes in punctuation, capitalization, and grammar.

8. The study of the percentages marked on the compositions shows that boys, as well as English teachers, recognize different grades of excellence in themes and that the marks assigned by one class of fifth-term boys show a lower average deviation (vary less on the average) than those of English teachers selected from three states. In marking theme number one, boys varied from 40 per cent to 71 per cent; English teachers, from 45 per cent to 80 per cent. On theme number five, a better one, boys varied from 60 per cent to 98 per cent; English teachers, from 65 per cent to 98 per cent. The average grades assigned to these two compositions by boys were 57.1 per cent and 80.1 per cent; by English teachers, 65 per cent and 82.3 per cent. The grades assigned by the English teachers tested are in general slightly higher than those given by the boys.

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9. In general comment on the themes, boys show fair ability in detecting the essential faults and excellences. The general criticisms of the brighter boys compare favorably with those of the English teachers. Even the discouraging suggestions on theme number nine, "You can improve this greatly by tearing it up and writing on another subject"; and "This is good work for a child of two years"; or the remark of the most benighted youth, "Poor English and sentences to unified and no variety in length," might be as useful to the writer as the comment of the one English teacher, "Let the story tell itself."

10. The study suggests the possibility of forming in boys and girls desirable intellectual habits and methods of work by having them assist in the critical work of the teachers of English and other subjects and suggests a principle for the more effective organization of school work.

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GOING FORTH TO THE PHILISTINES

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In current slang, when you strike down to the vital interests of a man you "get him where he lives." If your teaching establishes this live contact with a student, he is "at home" with you. But even in a college course in composition, student and instructor may dwell so far apart that they rarely get into each other's neighborhood. The latter, for instance, may have an apartment next door to the Literary-Snobs, while his protégé resides in that far district where the word literature is understood to mean advertising circulars. Manifestly, the raw air out yonder is not for sensitive nostrils, and the teacher accordingly summons the boy to his own apartment; for here a fine old-world atmosphere is exhaled from the Chaucerian tapestry—the scenes cunningly dissected and rehung with chronological accuracy. But the student, if indeed he ever finds the place, is altogether likely to sniff out the odor of moth-balls. The next moment he is gone!

"And thank God you are rid of a knave," says Professor Lounsbury.

But neither the Yale reactionist nor his prophets, Milton and Bacon, ever had to shoulder the precise responsibility offered by a thousand students enrolled in a single rhetoric course in a state university. It is a peculiar responsibility. In the good old days when composition courses were unnecessary, going to college meant one thing; today it means another—a dozen others. The type of student now chiefly represented in our thousand theme-writers was then sticking to his farm or shop or office. Now he demands special training from the state, in agriculture, engineering, or commerce. He is a Philistine, but he is canny and he is open-minded. He may have loafed through an inferior school, but he has something of a purpose now; and though he cannot endure a camphorated literary atmosphere, he generally wants to

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learn to write. He is often painfully aware of the need, and he accepts the conditions. Although, as Professor Lounsbury sadly observes, he may not seem exceeding joyful in the tribulation of theme-writing, yet after all he shows very much the same spirit that prompts the engineering student to curse his calculus, and the "Ag" his chemistry. The distress on a runner's face as he crosses the tape is hardly a fair indication of the degree of satisfaction he takes in the achievement. And so our Philistine, who never heard of the "philosophy" of rhetoric and grows restive the instant we mention the "art" of composition, has nevertheless a pretty wholesome respect for the "business" of learning to write. He presents a big new phase of the old problem. We haven't done much with the problem, but I think we are doing something useful for *him*. Perhaps—and this suggestion is the only excuse for my paper—perhaps we can succeed further if, recognizing not only his resistant practicality but also his coming-on disposition, we lay aside the tradition which doth so easily beset us, and fare forth with patience to meet him.

That tradition of ours, however, is worth a moment's pause.

Glancing back at some of the old-time utterances on the subject, we find both amusement and refreshment. A century and a half ago Dr. Hugh Blair, in his lectures to the Edinburgh students, was recommending "good sense as the foundation of all good composition." In spite of that admirable introduction, when it came Bishop Whately's turn to issue a textbook, he dismissed Blair's *Lectures* as incomparably inferior to Campbell's *Philosophy of Rhetoric*, not only in "depth of thought and ingenious original research, but in practical utility to the student." (One is almost deceived by the sound of that "practical utility.") Dr. Whately proceeded with some old-fashioned praise of Dr. Campbell, but presently took full advantage of his prerogative as a scholar and declared that in one large section of the book the distinguished gentleman had written himself down an ass.

Dr. Whately's own teaching, formidable as his "Elements" may have seemed to our grandfathers, was surprisingly personal and informal. Not only could he, in writing of rhetorical theory, use the phrase "practical utility," but as his biographer tells us,

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"he had the tact, *more Socratico*, by stimulus and suggestion to elicit the learner's latent powers." Accordingly one is not surprised to read in the introduction to his treatise a protest against a certain familiar tradition.

> In the learning of other arts [he wrote] it is usual to begin, for the sake of practice, with what is easiest; here, on the contrary, the tyro has usually a *harder* task assigned him . . . . than he will meet with in the actual business of life. . . . . Often . . . . such exercises will have formed a habit of stringing together empty commonplaces and vapid declamations. . . . . Look at the letter of an intelligent youth to one of his companions . . . . and you will see a picture of the youth himself, boyish indeed, but lively, unfettered, natural. . . . . Look at a theme composed by the same youth, on "Virtus est medium vitiorum" . . . . and you will see a picture of the same boy, dressed up in the garb, and absurdly aping the demeanor of an elderly man.

Contrast with this personal and informal note the pedagogic aloofness of the preface to Samuel Newman's *Practical System of Rhetoric*, belonging to the same period.

> The advantages proposed to be attained by the study of Rhetoric are: (1) some acquaintance with the philosophy of Rhetoric; (2) the cultivation of the taste, and in connection, the exercise of the imagination; (3) skill in the use of language; (4) skill in literary criticism; (5) the foundation of a good style.

The same high seriousness on the part of the learner is presupposed in a stately paragraph from the Yale catalogue of 1848. After outlining the regular studies—much Greek, more Latin, mathematics, philosophy, a little science, etc.—the compiler declares: These subjects

> give that furniture, and discipline, and elevation to the mind, which are the best preparation for the study of a profession, or of the operations which are peculiar to the higher mercantile, manufacturing, or agricultural establishments.

A properly dignified concession to "practical utility"! We wonder about the mental furniture and elevation of our prospective farm-managers, who rush in to our compulsory English class from a course in sheep-husbandry, all unconscious of the awful fact that they are preparing "for the study of the operations which are peculiar to the higher agricultural establishments."

A similar contrast is suggested in the preface to another mid-century product, Richard Green Parker's *Aids to English Compo-*

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sition. The writer is evidently eager to save the gifted from the folly of seeking his "Aids," for he frankly admits:

> Genius cannot be fettered, and an original and thinking mind, replete with its own exuberance will often burst out in spontaneous gushings, and open to itself new channels, through which the treasures of thought will flow in rich and rapid currents.

Obviously no genius would need the stimulus of the long lists of essay-topics suggested by Mr. Parker and his contemporaries. These topics, though mostly of one species, are ingeniously varied. Even the inferior minds of those who need some of Mr. Parker's aids might well burst out in spontaneous gushings when inspired by such subjects as "Parsimony and Prodigality," and "It is Easier to Be Good than to Seem Good"; though one would perhaps hesitate to evoke the rich and rapid currents of thought that might be struck from the rock of a topic like "Whitewash—Morally Considered."

Mr. Parker was the son of a bishop and he gave instruction to Boston youth. In assigning these topics, therefore, he doubtless felt that he was applying the plain precepts of Dr. Whately, who recommended "the selection of such subjects for exercises as are likely to be interesting to the student, and on which he has (or may, with pleasure, and without much toil, acquire) sufficient information."

That the "subjects for exercises" ought to be interesting we may have accepted as a matter of course, until we find Dr. Whately contradicted, in what has proved one of the most inspiring books that we use in our teaching. "It is well in learning to write," asserts Professor Bates, "to select uninteresting subjects." If his subsequent arguments, however, should swing us to this point of view, we are presently assailed again by Professor Lounsbury, who enters a charge that our institutions are persistently asking raw minds to prepare essays upon subjects "in which they have not the slightest interest"!

It is quite possible, then, that in taking a survey of the work of the rhetoricians, we may get the impression that they have spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing. Professor Newcomer would amend to read "some *old*

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thing," for we find in his own textbook the blunt assertion: "The bulk of matter in our rhetorics is traditionary and, except for higher, critical purposes, useless." Some might even venture to adapt the statement which Professor Kittredge once uttered anent Shakespearian commentaries; in which field, he declared, "every type of mind has been represented except the frankly idiotic."

On the theoretical side, then, there appears to be a good deal of dissonance and some pugnacity; whereas on the practical side, we have the records of successful teaching, and constant evidence of the personal equation. Instead of saying, "Everybody's wrong," I should prefer to suggest, "Everybody's right"—if only Everybody's system has a soul; if the man behind the theory knows when to get out in front. For in our set-to with the Philistines, we have sometimes retired in full armor behind the walls of theory, and invited the enemy to a siege. Why shouldn't we free ourselves from this Saul's armour of tradition—it really isn't a perfect fit—why not depend on our own sling-practice and a few smooth stones, get into the open, and draw near enough to our Goliath to take aim at a vulnerable part of his head?

An eye for the vulnerable spot—a discovery of the vital interests of a man—the will and the skill to "get him where he lives"; this, it strikes me, is fundamental—and neglected.

Our average Philistine has more than one vulnerable spot. I would specify four: (1) There are certain things which he likes to read. (2) There are certain things which he writes—whether he likes it or not. (3) There are certain other things which he would like to be able to write—whether he admits it or not. (4) In certain lines he has ideas or information enough—though usually unaware of the fact—for a good deal of useful and interesting writing.

In approaching him we may have to challenge the effectiveness of several pieces of our traditional equipment—the analysis of masterpieces for the cultivation of literary taste, the study of forms of discourse, and even the use of a textbook. This is merely admitting that the special problem may demand the stressing of the personal and the utilitarian at the expense of the literary and the formal. In emphasizing the practical we may incidentally—surreptitiously, even—make sure that in some measure this study of

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composition serves the larger end of developing taste and mental power; whereas when we insist on stressing this latter aim, we not only get faint assurance of the intended uplift, but we fail to perform the simple and obvious service which we owe.

If these principles are accepted it is hardly necessary to take up specific methods. I said our Philistine likes to read certain things—current magazines, for instance. A *Journal* contributor has already pointed out the most popular of these. It isn't difficult to find in them something worthy of class use. At any rate in vocabulary, structure, and general effectiveness this writing is far ahead of our Philistine's. In fact most of us instructors, who conscientiously disparage it, would be overjoyed if we could get an article of our own into the same columns. If, instead of disparaging, we seek the good and acknowledge it, we find ourselves on common ground with the student. This in itself justifies us in temporarily hitching our wagon to a Post instead of a star.

But it is not hard to carry over the student's interest, thus aroused, to other types, so long as the reading is alive and timely. And so we get at the best contemporary writers. Then finally an occasional "masterpiece" may prove a pearl not cast away. A descriptive article by John Muir, which had been read with interest in one class, led naturally to a comparison with some of the older models in the same field, which, thus approached, were taken with a certain good-will not commonly aroused by such models when assigned in a formal book of selections. Thus the cultivation of taste may go on none the less surely because its starting-point is the degree of taste already attained by the student, and its exercise partly unconscious and wholly unforced. And at the same time the study, without losing the original element of delight, can be made sufficiently strenuous—a man's task.

As for the writing which the Philistine is doing of his own accord, we may make this the basis for practice-work. Letters, reports, and papers due in other courses offer plenty of valuable exercise, and the student is rendered a double service.

In approaching the third point—the writing which the Philistine would like to do—one needs to discover and foster his latent ambition. There is usually some course or career which claims

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his special interest and stimulates his imagination. It may be merely the real estate business which the boy's father expects him to enter, and the writing may be nothing more ambitious than a circular describing a suburban addition; but its preparation offers some good problems, and the zeal with which their solution is undertaken is worth something.

Finally, our Philistine usually possesses more material than he suspects. One student, for instance, who made the familiar complaint that he had nothing to write about, awoke to actual enthusiasm when it was suggested that he knew enough about the coaching methods of a certain athletic director to write a magazine article on the subject. Another, who was listlessly contemplating a narrative of a summer trip, took hold of it with energy when he was made to realize that in the strangely old-fashioned customs of the district visited there lay possibilities for sharp and telling contrasts between an elder and a younger civilization. The amateur photographer learns with new interest that the right "text" to accompany some of his best pictures gives him a good opening. If the prospect of actual publication of one's work in a college periodical or the "home" newspaper can be held out, there is a marked increase of effort. The discovery of a student's resources may take time and tact, but they exist to an extent not sufficiently realized, and they are worth the search. This objective and utilitarian writing, followed up and worked over for a definite purpose, has proved such a stimulus that the practice writing itself has taken on new meaning and lost some of its drudgery.

Methods of applying the principle may, however, vary widely. I would emphasize chiefly the issue itself: the need and the possibility of vitalizing the composition work for that type of student whose literary capacity is commonly overrated and whose personal problem is not sufficiently taken into account. It may not be teaching rhetoric in the older sense as a "cultural" study, but in our present situation it is the right thing, if not the only broadly useful thing, for us to do.

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TO BEGINNERS IN ENGLISH TEACHING[1]

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There are four fundamental elements of success in the teaching of English, as of any other subject: faith in yourself, faith in your pupils, faith in your subject, and faith in your profession.

First, have faith in yourself as an English teacher. There are far too many people teaching English as an afterthought—because they drift into it, or because it is esteemed ladylike, or because "anyone can teach English." If you have no stronger motives than these and their like, go into some other occupation. But if you really feel that this is the work you were made to do, go at it with confidence and courage. Don't be afraid of mistakes. Everyone who does anything at all makes mistakes. Avoid repeating them, but don't let them break your spirit. Count your progress by the number of successes achieved rather than by the number of mistakes avoided. Good technique can be learned by study and practice; your initial enthusiasm is at present your best possession, and one not lightly to be lost.

Secondly, have faith in your pupils. This you will find hard at first. Think of the attitude of the college Senior of literary ability toward Sophomore themes; of the Sophomore's attitude toward the Freshman; of the Freshman's toward the "prep school" student; of his toward his mates who have no thought or desire of going to college. Add together these several grades of scorn, and see your chief initial danger—an unwarranted air of superiority to your pupils. Many of them will fail to show the qualities that have made you an English teacher; but they may have other qualities, just as valuable, in their way, to the world. If you have this faith in your pupils, you must learn to respect certain things that you will at first find rather trying.

Respect their youthful spirits, their fun, boiling over, as it

[1] Given before a group of prospective teachers of English at Mt. Holyoke College, April 10, 1912.

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may, to your personal inconvenience; their moodiness; their sensitiveness, so easily hurt by any witticism which they do not quite understand, and which, no matter how innocently meant, they will call "sarcasm." Go to their games—join in them, if you know how. Help them with their dramatics, their school paper; and never take the attitude of a censor who lets them do all the work and then blue-pencils it as much as possible—work with them as for a common project.

Respect their literary taste. Get their confidence, learn what their taste really is, and you will find it, in the main, sound—immature, as it should be; unconventional—they don't even know what the literary conventions are—but it will ordinarily ring pretty true. Don't expect it to be your mature and specialized taste. Why should a healthy, growing boy like "Cranford," or a girl who is going to be a homemaker, "Burke's Conciliation"? Let them range through a wide and varied reading list, and they will pick out what is good for them, and surprise you by their comments. Here are some notes that came to me all within one week, from a little class who are still three years from entering college:

Mrs. Gaskell's *Ruth:* "I think the book is well and interestingly written. The characters are very lifelike, and are not overdrawn. It is something a little out of the ordinary. The descriptions are short and vivid; the character action is quick and interesting."

Schiller's *William Tell:* "The story is very exciting and well carried out. I enjoyed reading the book immensely, and read some parts over three times, for the thoughts were so wonderfully expressed that it was well worth while."

Arnold Bennett's *Buried Alive:* "I liked this book and think it is well told, only I think he shouldn't have sacrificed himself so long. I think it would have been better for him to have given himself up, as he was such a great man in the estimation of the people."

Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre:* "Jane Eyre is a story which I think could have been written in seventy pages instead of over four hundred. . . . . I did not like any of the characters."

Respect their written style, with all its crudities. Be suspicious of the carefully ironed style, in which there are no mistakes to correct: there's not likely to be much else. Finish, accuracy in detail, is the last thing; it is often a sign that the writer has stopped growing. There is a kind of efflorescence of style, an inclination toward fine writing, highly irritating to the college-trained critic, and very properly attacked in Sophomore English courses, which is

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a sign of promise in the high-school writer. This is why the editors of school papers pass such low entrance examinations. One of our editors, a brilliant girl who wrote stories with almost the feeling of a Miss Jewett behind them, entered college with a D in English. In six weeks, she was having stories printed in the college magazine. Another girl, of no particular originality, entered with flying colors, on the faultlessness of her writing; the following year she was reported back to the school as failing in English. She had reached her limit.

The whole secret of dealing with young people is to remember that they are not finished product, but raw material. Your business is not to pass judgment, approving and rejecting; it is to discover latent possibilities, to invent new lines of development; to utilize even the waste product, as a modern manufacturing concern does. Try to see in every boy and girl an individual for whom the world has some fitting place; and to read his character, not at its present value, but for what it promises.

Thirdly, have faith in your subject. You doubtless already believe in the importance of English literature; but you must believe in it, not only as an academic tradition, but as a vital force in the world today: a force that affects not only the scholar in his library, but the clerk in the subway. If you have this kind of faith, you will avoid, as pedantic, many common practices.

There is the pedantry of the college notebook. Don't get out the lecture notes on your favorite college course and warm them up for your high-school classes. Don't read them that essay that brought you an A, on William Godwin's novels, or "The Place of James Thompson in the Romantic Movement." Burn it! That essay, and those lectures, were intended to train your mind to deal with fresh material, in your own way; to give you a method, a point of view, a critical judgment—not material to pass along to learners of widely different age and needs.

There is the pedantry, dear to book lovers, of the literary classic. Courses in school and college naturally deal, in the main, with things of the past: things that have become standardized by the opinions of the passing generations. But literature did not stop, though the textbooks may, with Browning. Benson, and Mackaye, and Bennett, and Mrs. Deland, and many another, are writing,

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and others will follow them. If we believe in literature as a living force, we must take these authors into account. And not all literature is in books. We must add to our resources the theater, the newspaper, the magazine—even the cheap magazine. Who can doubt that the *World's Work*, *McClure's*, the *American*, the *Saturday Evening Post*, have a more moving effect on the great mass of the American people today than the *North American Review* or the *Atlantic?* We must reckon with these things, as well as with our sets of classic authors.

There is the pedantry, happily going out of fashion, of the annotated text. I used to teach Milton's minor poems from a book which gave forty-five pages to the poems and 136 to comment on them; and as if that were not enough, I filled the margins with more notes, in black and red ink. You will remember, in Dr. Crothers' essay on "The Enjoyment of Poetry," in *The Gentle Reader*, the passage where he supposes these lines from *Paradise Lost* to be taken for study:

> Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks
> In Vallombrosa, where th' Etrurian shades
> High over arched embower, or scattered sedge
> Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion armed
> Hath vexed the Red Sea coast, whose waves o'erthrow
> Busiris and his Memphian chivalry.

What an opportunity this presents to the schoolmaster! "Come now," he cries with pedagogic glee; "answer me a few questions. Where is Vallombrosa? What is the character of its autumnal foliage? Bound Etruria. What is sedge? Explain the myth of Orion. Point out the constellation on the map of the heavens. Where is the Red Sea? Who was Busiris? By what other name was he known? Who were the Memphian chivalry?"

Here is material for exhaustive research in geography ancient and modern, history, botany, astronomy, meteorology, chronology, and archaeology. The industrious student may get almost as much information out of *Paradise Lost* as from one of those handy compilations of useful knowledge which are sold on the railway cars for twenty-five cents. As for the poetry of Milton, that is another matter.

The special pedantry of the moment is in devices for teaching composition. Composition-Rhetorics are being turned out by the publishing houses by scores. They are usually based on some device which the author has found effective, and which he now generalizes, by a process familiar to logicians, into a universal rule by

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which past writings are to be judged and future ones composed. The latest I have seen is a book that starts with the dictum that a paragraph is, in its essentials, a geometric proposition; you have a *theorem*, the topic sentence (always supposing there is one): *Given*, the subject of the topic sentence; *To prove*, the predicate of the topic sentence; *Proof*, sentences 2, 3, 4, etc., to final *Summary*, Q.E.D. Then follows a little diagram that looks something like a fern-dish, which the reader is enjoined to fix in his memory as a picture of what the paragraph should be, when completed. Just try to imagine Stevenson, or Lamb, for example, sitting down to write a paragraph that should be like a proposition in geometry!

All these kinds of pedantry you can escape only by thinking of your subject, not as dead, formal, cut-and-dried, but as living, growing, changing, reacting on people today. Ask yourself, How is this bit of instruction I offer going to work out in the life, present or future, of the pupil? How will it fit the facts of the living world in which he grows up? Does it tend to develop in him habits of reading and writing that will become a welcome, a necessary part of his life, or is it an artificial task performed for its own sake alone?

Finally, have faith in your profession—the profession of teaching. This does not mean to look down upon the stenographer, the factory girl, the trained nurse, because their work is not academic. That is mere snobbishness. But respect your work enough to make it truly a profession—to learn, and to advance all you can, the technical knowledge of education. Of course there are "born" teachers, just as there are "born" nurses; only there are not enough of them born to go around. In the care of the sick, the "born" nurse has given place to the trained nurse, who does the right thing, not by instinct, but because she knows the rules of her hospital. The untrained teacher cannot now gain admission to the systems of our larger cities; and if the purpose of the state Board of Education of Massachusetts is effected, it will soon be impossible for anyone to teach in a Massachusetts high school without pedagogical training.

Some of our most honored colleges object to this movement. They say we have no science of education; that the student would be far better employed in taking more courses in his subject. They tell us, moreover, that the really able students see this for them-

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selves, and only the weakest of them take courses in education. There is, unhappily, some truth in these charges: many courses in education are very thin stuff, and many of those who elect them are incapable of taking anything more solid. But that is because we are just at the beginning; and we have already got at some things that are worth while. We are sure of certain things in schoolroom psychology, thanks to men like James and Thorndike and Dewey. We are getting exact standards of certain kinds of progress, like the Courtis tests in arithmetic, and the Ayres Handwriting Scale. We are learning something about how a recitation should be conducted. I have before me a stenographic report of a lesson in which the teacher asked 219 questions in 37 minutes. Assuming five classes a day, that means upward of a thousand questions a day—twenty odd thousand a month! And this is by no means exceptional; few teachers ask below 100 questions a lesson. Is it any wonder they break down nervously? Do we, or do we not, need further study of method in the recitation?

The beginning teacher can get in touch with the professional side of the work in several ways. First, read the standard books, like James's *Talks to Teachers*, Dewey's *How We Think*, and those in your special field, like Chubb's *The Teaching of English*, and Baker, Carpenter, and Scott's *English in the Schools*. Then follow current periodicals: especially the new *English Journal*, and the leaflets of your state English Teachers' Association. Visit classes of teachers of reputation, methodically, always asking, What is this recitation trying to accomplish? Is it succeeding or failing? What are the elements of its success or failure?—and recording your answer. Keep similar notes on your own recitations. Put your best thought into the assignment of advance lessons, and know beforehand what you are going to assign, and for what reason. Be ready to co-operate with other teachers in any well-planned experiment, particularly one the results of which can be measured with some precision. And from the slowly accumulating body of your reading, your observation, and your experience, if you analyze what comes your way from these sources, you will gain in time in professional expertness and in professional wisdom.

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A SCHOOL COURSE IN DRAMATICS

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The newspapers recently noted the fact that the Methodist church at its national conference this year again endeavored to remove that objectionable clause in its discipline relative to prohibitory amusements, notably the theater. The strength of sentiment and conviction expressed would argue ultimate success. This discussion is but one of the many signs of the times that the drama is coming into its own. Dramatic schools, courses in playwriting in the colleges and correspondence schools, endowed theaters, the multiplicity of playhouses, increasing attendance, more intelligent criticism of plays by the press, censorship, books and articles on the drama by the ton, and greater moral and intellectual responsibilities on the part of managers in serving the public, testify to the universality of the dramatic instinct, its powerful moral and intellectual stimuli, and its unlimited social service. With the press, the pulpit, fiction, and public office, the drama at last claims and maintains equal place. Why not, then, give it formal recognition in education?

In all the educational palaver that is going on, one thing must be kept strictly in mind. Adolescence requires everything worth while that will fit it to meet the complex demands of the age. Let us face the facts. Social and home conditions today make it almost impossible for a youth to help himself. Everything conceivable is done for him, thought out for him, placed in his possession. Study is irksome and unnecessary. His many hours of recreation are filled at the theater, vaudeville, moving-picture show, the card table, with a novel, in out-of-door sports, and at the dance-hall. The public schools are censured because they do not combat this, are blamed because they do not make graduates walking encyclopedias, lightning calculators, and models of business behavior, while at the same time they are flayed for trying to meet present conditions of living.

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It is obvious, then, that the core of the criticism at present directed against the public-school system is that it does not "produce the goods." The merchant complains that a high-school employee is not punctual, tidy, industrious, or alert. The lawyer argues that his embryo successor is slow of thinking and speech, forgetful, not enterprising. The school superintendent laments that the young teacher is vague, shoddy in scholarship, lacking in tact and sympathy. The manufacturer does not want the boy who is too superior to work with his hands; and if he places him on a stool he finds that he cannot figure or spell, and, in general, is made of putty, not phosphate. It would seem, then, that the public demands of its schools not only mental training, but moral judgments and active personalities. And it should. The age calls for it, despite the inconsistent air of superiority the critics assume who were trained merely in the "Three R's."

Clearly, then, of these three processes—training of mind, instilling of moral judgment, and cultivation of personality—the last is most important. Scholarship without tact will not make a teacher. A good speller with no sympathy will not make a nurse. A clever accountant with no enterprise will never become the head of a firm. Honor grades in English literature, but no social charm or intelligence, will not make a girl useful and attractive in home or community. The valedictorian who does not understand men is not wanted. In general, we look to the men of virile personalities rather than of mere intellect when the city or the state is in a crisis. Industry may make a well-ordered brain; but it takes industry and intelligence to make personality. The duty of the public schools is plain: to develop live, forceful, attractive personalities.

There are many means to that end. Foremost, of course, is the influence of the teacher's personality. Many a teacher of average scholarship is effective because of an abundance of human nature. Public debates, declamation contests, school patronage of the pupils' social life, athletics, class and school organizations of all kinds—all these are legitimate agencies in supplementing mental training with the development of personality. Many schools have come to recognize the value of dramatics to this end. Too many pervert its function to tawdry entertainment; some few

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take it too seriously. But there are still many live, influential schools that look at the matter with indifference, or, at least, take it as a matter of course. Unfortunately there are some classes of people left who look with disfavor on this plan of harnessing play with work—misguided church people, quasi-public-spirited newspaper editors, parents whose own lack of discipline has produced flighty children, and school boards wedded to the "Three R's."

What, then, can school dramatics do? A systematic course in dramatics will develop in the pupil resourcefulness, a knowledge of human life, and altruism.

Teachers complain that pupils cannot or will not think for themselves. They are slow to help themselves to knowledge, depend too much on the teacher to blaze the way, and are much slower to act. They do not see the relation of their studies; they do not apply theories to practice. Probably this is the fault of a textbook pedagogy, but it is just as much a by-product of the spirit of the age. When the pupil is assigned a part in a play, and brings to bear all his energy and understanding to make the most of it, his resourcefulness is taxed to the utmost. If it does not make him exercise initiative and enterprise in illuminating his part with interest and force; if it does not open his eyes to a wide range of personal habits, mannerisms, and all that makes a man's genius count among men; if it does not give him discriminating taste, alertness, mental grasp, poise of body and mind, nothing else will.

More than this is the knowledge of human nature gained and applied. If we want our pupils to be honest, let them study the part of the liar, the thief, or the hypocrite; if we want them virtuous, let them portray the evil-doer; if free from cant, sweet of manner, tolerant in judgment, and sympathetic, let them exhibit the traits of the prig, the snob, the "grouch," the pedant, the recluse, the cynic, and the miser—stingy of purse and self. Add to these moral considerations, correctness of judgment, concentration of mind, initiative, independence, and unselfishness, not the least important.

Contrary to popular impression, school dramatics breeds the highest good spirit and altruism. A football team or a class organization cannot be run without teamwork; neither can school

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dramatics. Each pupil can be made to see and feel this. Therefore, the work should never be committed wholly to an undergraduate organization. An English teacher should be engaged capable of doing this work; or where elocution is a regular course, such a teacher should be able to direct this work. He should control and dominate the organization, conduct preliminary trials, assign parts, direct rehearsals, manage the production, and be always in evidence, the head and inspiration of it all.

But he must make his pupils feel that above all the training in effective personality is the dominant note of altruism. Everyone must pull together; there must be no dissatisfaction over parts assigned. Pupils must feel that a certain part was assigned to a certain pupil because that pupil was best adapted to simulating such a character. If they believe they are fitted for other rôles, they must show, by study and application, that they understand the parts. They must realize that their part is a necessary element in the entire product, not to be slighted or omitted, but vital, impressive, and consequential. This sort of spirit produces the best ensemble, and gives the pupils one of the main benefits to be derived.

Another aspect of this altruistic spirit must consist in the object in producing plays. Many schools go to great expense in staging productions, but gain no financial reward. The plays are given for social diversion, as features of holiday or commencement festivities. In such schools the merits of dramatics are not considered, and the type of plays given is usually for mere entertainment. Often what money is earned is spent in repleting class treasuries—an indefensible proceeding—or in giving class banquets. Why not make the matter a solid financial proposition as well as an educational and artistic one? The classes or dramatic clubs can be taught useful lessons in civics by having some ulterior, beneficial project in mind, such as decorating the school walls, buying books, apparatus, athletic equipment, or providing for musicals and lecture courses. Each class can then go on record as a broad-minded, large-spirited set of young people, ambitious to leave their school some testimony of their appreciation of its services to them. The Senior classes of the school which the writer represents give the

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proceeds of their annual Senior play for such purposes. The popularity of the "Senior class play" has grown so that each class has no difficulty in filling a local theater for two and sometimes three performances. In a period of seven years, about $3,000 has been added to the school's funds, with the result that the high school now has its walls amply decorated with paintings, busts, and frescoes, and its library increased. Moreover, the funds for a pipe organ and an athletic field were materially increased from this source, and both made possible. What this high school can accomplish others can.

This article will be of little value unless it offers some practical suggestions as to methods of employing material in the classes, convenient times of production, and types of plays to be used.

In a course of dramatics, something can be done each year in all the classes. The writer has found from experience that classes get the most from such classics as *The Lady of the Lake*, *Ivanhoe*, *The Princess*, *Silas Marner*, *The Tale of Two Cities*, etc., if certain recitations are given over to dramatized forms of these works. This can be done by the teacher, or often by the more mature pupils as exercises in English composition. No pretense at costume or scenery need be made in these brief dialogues. But often an entire review of the classic can be made by the pupils enacting certain episodes, the teacher filling in by reading aloud connecting parts. If the school possesses a good workable platform capable of stage adaptation, let the various classes compete in this incidental work and later on in the year give a complete performance of some dramatization before the school. This sort of work can be pursued in each class, the range of work varying from Longfellow's "Miles Standish" to Tennyson's "The Falcon." Of course such work should be kept within the limits of school conditions. But the teacher can keep a record of the varying abilities of his pupils, and when they become Seniors—if it is the custom of the Senior class to give the great annual play—the material will be at hand to be drawn from. If the school prefers a dramatic club, membership should be limited to the upper classes. But the material can be provided for in the same way. One or two works a year can be produced, according to the convenience of the school; one play should be "light," the other "heavy." Obviously, the

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school will try to avail itself of the best possible natural conditions; it will stage the production at a local theater, if possible, and secure the best assistance in stage management, costuming, properties, etc. But with a little study, all these details can be managed by teachers.

Let me close this paper with a brief list of plays that I have found available in the past, both from actual use and from the use of others. If any teacher contemplates using any of them, and wishes more information, I will gladly furnish it.

One year we gave a condensed version of Sophocles' *Antigone*, the school orchestra playing Mendelssohn's music throughout. *The American Citizen*, by Ryley, is a good modern comedy. *The Burglar*, by Cameron, furnishes light fun, but takes skill. Many schools play Ibsen's *A Doll's House* with skill and discernment. Robertson's *David Garrick* has merit in no small degree; likewise *The Rivals*, of Sheridan, and *She Stoops to Conquer* of Goldsmith. W. D. Howell's farces are good for incidental purposes, as are the following: *Lend Me Five Shillings*, by Morton; *High C*, by Rosenfel; *Ici on parle Français*, by Williams; *Two Strings to Her Bow*, by Harrison; and *Mistress Penelope*, by Marble. Of the shorter plays more serious in nature may be mentioned *The Blind Girl of Castel Cuille*, by Longfellow; *The Land of Heart's Desire*, by Yeats; *Gringoire*, by Shirley; and *The Violin Maker of Cremona*, by Coppée. Among the good comedies may be noted *Mrs. Compton's Manager*, by Osgood; *Nephew or Uncle*, by Abbott; *Walker, London*, by Barrie; *The Butterflies*, by Carleton; and *Mice and Men*, by Ryley. *A Scrap of Paper*, by Simpson, and *The Private Secretary*, by Hawtry, are overworked and overdrawn. In fact, little good can come in school work from farces, strained estimates of human nature, or forced effects. Belasco's *May Blossom, Fanchion, The Cricket*, of Waldamer, and *Little Em'ly*, a dramatization of *David Copperfield*, make good straight dramas. By all means, avoid the works of Pinero, Clyde Fitch, and Jones. These writers picture unsavory life, unnecessary conditions, and, on the whole, are above the immature mind. But, keeping to the kind outlined above—and there are many more plays possible of presentation—the best purposes of school dramatics will be conserved.

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HORATIUS[1]

MARION HARVEY
English High School, Worcester, Mass.

Act I

Scene 1. *House of* Lars Porsena.

Enter Lars Porsena *with attendants and messengers.*

Porsena: Where are our messengers?

Attendant: Here, my lord; thou hast given orders that they be present.

Porsena: Ay, I have done so; I have work for them. Our great house has been long enough banished. We march to Rome presently, there to establish our rights. By the Nine Gods, I swear our house shall no longer suffer wrong. Ride forth, my men, go throughout every part of the land. Summon our soldiers to appear before us on yonder field sixty days hence. And shame be on the head of the false Etruscan who lingers in his home, be it cot or palace, when Porsena of Clusium marches to Rome.

[*Exit with attendants*]

First Messenger: We have work before us. Let us consider our journeys.

Second Messenger: There be five of us.

First Messenger: Ay. Carrolus, go thou toward Pisa. Let your trumpet be heard all the way. There to the proud mart where come triremes laden with light-haired slaves. Let every man know that our lord has need of him. Let the crowded market-place be empty till Porsena has conquered Rome. Vestus, the oaks bending over Auser are tall, fat the stags on the Ciminian hill, and plentiful the waterfowl about the Volsinian mere. But go you, say that no ax must be heard by Auser's rill, no hunter shall follow the stag, and that the waterfowl may fly unharmed until

[1] The author is a pupil in the drama course of the Worcester (Mass.) High School. In this course attempts at dramatization are encouraged in connection with the study of English plays.—Editor.

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Great Porsena has attained his end. Ardus, to Arretium; there must the old men, too infirm for battle, reap the harvests. And thee, companion of my boyhood, friend of my more mature years, go you to Umbro. This year must the young boys plunge the struggling sheep in that great stream. To Luna, I, where the vats will this year be trodden by the white feet of laughing girls whose fathers have marched to Rome.

All: We have heard, so go we; farewell until sixty days hence we meet Lars Porsena. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE II. *The Trysting Day.*

A room in the Temple, The Thirty Chosen Prophets.
Enter Porsena.

Porsena: What say the verses which mighty seers of old have traced from the right on linen white?

The Thirty (*in one voice*): We have glad news for thee, beloved of Heaven. After three days of turning o'er and o'er the books we are confident that success awaits thee. Go forth, conquer Rome, and bring back her golden shields to hang round Nurscia's altars.

Porsena: The gods are in our favor, we need not fear defeat.

[*Enter* Messenger]

What news? Are the legions assembled?

Messenger: My lord, before the gates of Sutrium there are fourscore thousand footmen and ten thousand cavalry. With them are many of the banished Romans and many stout allies; Tuscan Mamilius, also, prince of the Latian name.

[*Exit at signal from* Porsena]

Porsena: Ready then are we to attack Rome. We cannot fail. Our wrongs are about to be righted and Lars Porsena is a proud man this day. [*Exit*]

SCENE III. *Scene changes to Rome.*

One of the city gates, with old men and children, helpless women and slaves passing into the city for protection.
Enter Herminius *and* Spurius Lartius.

Herminius: 'Tis sad to see what tumult and fear exists about the city. The burghers bring their household goods and flock to the city for protection.

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Lartius: Yea, but many homes will be sacked by the unscrupulous invaders. 'Tis whispered that the false Sextus is among the foemen.

Herminius: There is great fear in the Senate. They have received word that all the surrounding country has been devastated. Even the boldest among them tremble to think of the approaching battle. [*Exeunt*]

Act II

Scene I. *Before the river gate.*

Enter the Consul, Horatius, Spurius Lartius, Herminius, *and others of the soldiers.*

Consul: Janiculum is lost. Nothing can now save the town unless the bridge goes down.

[*Enter* Scout, *running*]

Who comes here so breathlessly?

Scout (*shouting*): To arms! to arms! Lars Porsena is here!

[*Falls exhausted and is carried out by two soldiers*]

[*Enter* Messenger]

Messenger: I come from the hilltop, O Consul. From there the approaching troops can be clearly seen. 'Tis a mighty army with a long array of helmets and spears. The proud banners of twelve fair cities shine in the sun, but that of Clusium, the terror of the Umbrian and the Gaul, is high above every other. Lars Porsena may be seen in his ivory car and on one side is Mamilius, on the other side the false Sextus. When the people saw Sextus among them, a yell arose which rent the firmament and even the children screamed out curses.

Consul (*groaning*): The bridge, the bridge! They will be upon us before the bridge goes down; then what hope is there for saving the town?

Horatius (*stepping forward*):

"To every man upon this earth
Death cometh soon or late,
And how can man die better
Than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his fathers
And the temples of his gods?

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I, with two more to help me,
Will hold the foe in play.
Now who will stand on either hand
And keep the bridge with me?"

Spurius Lartius:

"Lo, I will stand on thy right hand
And keep the bridge with thee."

Herminius:

"I will abide on thy left side
And keep the bridge with thee."

Consul: My brave men! So let it be. [*Seizing an ax*] Come, let us to our share of the work. Let the fathers and the commons join in protecting the town. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE II. *A narrow pathway.*

Enter The Three.

Horatius: Be prepared, comrades; we know not how soon they come. If we are victorious our homes will be saved; if we are conquered we will fight to the finish and die like men with the harness on our backs.

[*Enter* three chiefs *from opposite side*]

First Chief: Will ye fight?

Horatius: We will.

Second Chief: Know you not that we can soon overpower you? We have many behind us.

The Three: We are ready for you.

[*Fighting, in which all three* chiefs *are thrown to the ground*]

[*Enter three more* chiefs]

First Chief: Hounds, do ye not know me? I am Arruns, who slew the great wild boar. Think ye that I shall be overpowered by curs?

The Three: Come on.

[*More fighting.* The Three *hold their ground and slay the invaders*]

[A pause]

Horatius: Are they so soon satisfied? Come they no more to try their steel against us?

[*Shouts from behind,* "Astur; the Lord of Luna"]

[*Enter* Luna, *smiling*]

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Luna: The she-wolf's litter are right savage to behold. They stand fiercely at bay but will ye dare to follow if Astur clears them from your way?

[*Rushing toward* Horatius *brandishing sword; sharp fighting, in which* Luna *falls*]

Horatius: Oh, my fair guests, see the welcome that awaits you. Now who comes next to taste our Roman cheer?

[*Long pause, sounds of voices.* Sextus *enters, then backs out*]

The Three: Welcome, Sextus, welcome home. Why turn thee back? This is the way to Rome.

[Sextus *comes on furiously, looks toward the dead, and turns back in fear,* Horatius *following. Calls from the Roman side,* "Back, back, Horatius, e'er the ruin fall"]

[*Exeunt* Spurius Lartius *and* Herminius]

Act III

Scene I. *On Roman side.* (*Terrific crash.*)

Lartius: The bridge is down. Where is Horatius?

Herminius: He did not cross with us? Our brave companion is on the farther side. I fear that he has been taken by the enemy.

Lartius: 'Twas thirst for Sextus' blood kept him, the vile Sextus. He feared to show his face; saw you how he slunk away from us?

Herminius: And good reasons has he for fearing us.

Consul: But the enemy, did they show signs of weakening?

Herminius: They feared to come on when Horatius challenged them. We are out of their power now. But Horatius! Would I were again with him, to share his fate. [*Exeunt*]

Act IV

Scene I. *The narrow way.*

Enter Horatius *from one side,* Mamilius, Lars Porsena, *and* Sextus *from the other.*

Sextus (*smiling*): Down with him. Now we may avenge the death of our comrades.

Porsena: Now yield thee to our grace.

Horatius: Never! till the vile Sextus has received his due.

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Long enough has he continued his evil course. I shall avenge the wrongs of Rome.

[*Springs at* Sextus *and after a brief struggle overcomes him*]

Porsena: Villain, darest thou do this deed?

Horatius: Yea, and more if need arise. Wilt thou try me?

Mamilius (*shrinking back*): I am weak from wounds; 'twould not be an even match.

Horatius (*aside*): Cowards, they dare not fight. Their spirit is broken and my work is done. Oh, Father Tiber, Father to the Romans, this day shall a Roman's life and arms be intrusted to thee. May'st thou care well for them. [*Exit*]

Porsena: The fool dares to throw himself into that raging flood? 'Twill be sure death to him. Ah well, we shall at last be avenged. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE II. *The Roman side.*

Enter Consul, Spurius Lartius, Herminius, *and others.*

Herminius: Jove have mercy! He has jumped into the river. He will be dashed to death. The river is swollen by months of rain.

Lartius: And the fragments of the bridge are being lashed furiously about by the surges. Pray Heaven he may not be caught in them.

Consul: But see! His crest shows above the water. He is gaining!

[*Shouts of joy*]

Hark! Even the enemy cheer!

Lartius: He could advance more rapidly were he not weighed down by his heavy armor.

Herminius: Or worn by loss of blood. Oh, he sinks.

Lartius: No, see, he is rising again.

Consul: Let us go prepare a fit welcome for him.

[*Exeunt*]

SCENE III. *Ranks of the enemy.*

Enter Porsena, Mamilius, *and others.*

Mamilius: If he gains the farther shore, it will be wholly on account of his brave heart. Never before did a swimmer find his way through such a flood safely to the landing place.

Porsena: Heaven help him, and bring him safe to shore, for never before have I witnessed such a feat of arms. [*Exeunt*]

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Act V

Scene I. *The Roman side*

Enter Consul, Herminius, Spurius Lartius, *and others.*

Herminius: He comes, he comes! He is safe at last!

[*Enter* Horatius, *dripping*]

Consul: My brother, thou hast this day saved Rome from her fiercest enemies. Our liberties were threatened; thou hast restored them. Had Lars Porsena crossed yonder bridge with his army, by this time we should all be in bondage. Thou hast forever freed us from the vile Sextus that wrought the deed of shame. The Tarquins have this day been driven out as truly as in days of yore they were driven out by thy ancestors. In recognition of thy services to the state, as much of the public corn lands as two strong oxen can plough from early morning till late at night will be given thee.

Horatius: O Consul, this honor is not due me. I have done only what any Roman would do. These, my brave companions, have done as much as I. Pray thee, give them at least the same honor thou givest me.

Consul: It shall be done.

Herminius: Come, Horatius, thou sufferest from thy wounds; they must be cared for. Come with me. [*Exeunt*]

Scene II. *In the Comitium.*

Enter Consul, Herminius, *and* Sculptor.

Consul: It must be placed here [*indicating spot*].

Sculptor: A statue of Horatius as he looked on that memorable day.

Herminius: And forget not that he must have the harness on his back, and show him halting on one knee. Underneath in letters of gold, tell how valiantly he kept the bridge and saved the town.

Consul: 'Twill be a memorial for our posterity; our children shall tell their children of the man who risked his life for Rome. While the world lasts may his name be sounded abroad. Let the mothers of the future pray to Juno for sons as brave as he who kept the bridge so well in the brave days of old.

[*Finis*]

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EDITORIAL

SIGNS OF PROGRESS

The latest report of the National Conference on Uniform Entrance Requirements in English[1] marks a distinct educational advance. It is more liberal than its predecessors and it reflects more accurate knowledge of conditions in the schools. The separation of the requirement and examination in grammar and composition from the requirement and examination in literature is especially to be commended. This will tend to greater emphasis upon the practical aspects of composition, and it will aid in establishing a literary point of view in the teaching of the classics.

The latter result will be promoted also by the lengthening of the lists of books and selections. The new report includes over 200 titles as opposed to about 70 in the report of 1909. The largest additions are made to the Shakespeare group and the fiction group, those in which the human interest is strongest. Certain volumes of selections—of short stories, of ballads, of letters, and of American poets, the contents of which are not prescribed—will prove a welcome supplement to the all-too-isolated classics. The wider freedom of choice will make the way of the pedantic examiner hard, and it will also greatly discourage drill masters from useless grind upon textual notes. The rights of the schools are still further recognized in the provision that candidates shall present certificates from their principals showing what reading they have done. If certification is so far valid—but why anticipate?

The four recommendations appended to the report should be accepted and acted upon without delay. The schools are known to be strongly favorable to them, and we believe that most of the colleges will cheerfully accept them. It has been demonstrated at Harvard and elsewhere that an examination in literature may be set successfully without prescribing a list of books. Oral examinations are now given to candidates for entrance at certain colleges,

[1] See p. 446 of this issue.

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and no college can afford to omit procedure which will encourage the schools in perfecting their pupils in oral expression, the most useful of arts. Schools which do four years of work in English should receive corresponding credit; it is not for the colleges to say what the high-school course shall consist of. As for the recommendation concerning supplemental lists of reading, to be made out by the individual schools, this is but recognizing a practice which the best schools have already found desirable. Local needs must be respected, and the connection between school life and home and social life must be firmly established. The historic classics are not sufficient to determine taste in the matter of the theater, the current magazine, and the contemporary novel.

There is further occasion for rejoicing in the prospect of a national syllabus of the high-school course in English. The union of the four national committees and the support of the Commissioner of Education[1] would seem to insure a document of very great value and influence. Heretofore, the chief consideration has been college entrance. In the present instance, the educational point of view, the desire to meet the needs of the schools themselves, will prevail. When once the schools are sure of themselves, the matter of college entrance can be easily adjusted.

It must not be forgotten, however, that teaching force and material equipment in the end determine the results of English study. For this reason it is impossible to attach too much importance to the movement which is now on foot to improve both. The Hopkins report shows conclusively that English teachers are generally overloaded and poorly provided with tools. At the same time, English, by no means the least important, is the least expensive subject in the curriculum. The campaign of publicity now well started can hardly fail to secure for English the status which it must have to insure efficiency, namely, that of a laboratory subject with laboratory hours, laboratory equipment, and laboratory limitation upon the size of classes.

[1] See the report of the English conferences at the National Education Association, p. 451.

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THE ROUND TABLE

GOING INTO THE SILENCE

Children are not taught to regard their study of the classics in quite the right light. Some are taught to regard it as a task, pure and simple, which in some mysterious way, beyond them to understand, will contribute to their future well-being. Some are taught to look on the literature class as one of relaxation, a place to yield oneself to the aesthetic influence of culture, where enjoyment is to be had of a peculiarly elevated sort. Here there is confusion between reading and study. Other children are taught to look on their literature class as an added means of information to contribute to their general intelligence. I advance the proposition that there should be no absorption of knowledge which does not have as an object more or less immediate some form of social expression or service.

I have an exercise which I think fosters and makes clear this ideal. I call it "going into the silence," applying to the classroom a well-known literary phrase. When we are studying a particularly difficult classic, Milton's *L'Allegro* or *Il Penseroso* for instance, and we have come to some hard passage, I say, "Come, let us work together upon this. Let everybody concentrate. Let everybody 'go into the silence.' Here is a forest; we must cut it down, tree by tree. Or, changing the figure, who is to be the investigator, the discoverer, who will shed light on these confusing problems?" I tell them that they compose a miniature world of civilization in which each one should seek to discover truth for the benefit of all.

This point of view takes with them, and it is surprising to see with what energy they strive to be the Marconi, the Amundsen, or the Dr. Schliemann of their small civilization group.

To show what bearing this has on creative reading, I will give an exercise in detail. Let us take the opening lines of *Il Penseroso*.

> Hence, vain deluding Joys,
> The brood of Folly without father bred.
> How little you bested,
> Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys.

I say to them, "Well, here is something that we will have to work on together. Who can illuminate these lines for us a little?" After a few

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moments of silence, a hand goes up, and a pupil gives the opinion that, "Somebody is telling somebody else to get out, because it says 'Hence.'" This is encouraging. "Henry has got us started on a good line of thought," I say. "Henry has put the problem before us clearly. It has now become our task to find out who these 'somebodies' are."

For a moment or two the class again "goes into silence"; then someone brings forth the theory that the "brood of Folly" is being told to get out. We accept this tentatively. Good questions are always in order from the children, so I am glad to have someone ask whether "bested" is a participle or an ordinary verb form. The majority quickly dispose of its participial pretensions, but there is more of a difference of opinion as to its tense, which we leave unsettled, pending further investigation. However, I venture the opinion that it was a good idea to pay attention to the grammar of the thing, and that maybe some further inspection of grammatical relations would lead to some surprising discoveries. The faithful grammarian of the class then tells us of the appositive relation between "vain deluding Joys" and "brood of Folly." By this time the class has brightened up; yet a general curiosity is voiced by a girl who asks why the "vain deluding Joys" were to be driven away. And so on until the entire passage has been made clear.

Such an exercise is not much of a memory drill. It is too hard work to be very amusing. Its object seems to be to give information, rather than to get it. Nevertheless I believe that this kind of work is more educative than any other we can do in English. We are giving the pupils practice in relating knowledge, which is thought; we are promoting the attitude of investigation, which is studentship; we are training them in the habit of contributing to a general good, which is civic duty; we are instilling the idea of hard-won progress, which is the Joy of Life.

LEWIS H. MOULTON

KEWAUNEE, WIS.

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NEWS AND NOTES

A NEW SOCIETY IN PHILADELPHIA

Departmental conferences of teachers of the higher schools of Philadelphia were held in the William Penn High School for Girls, on Saturday morning, April 27, 1912. That of the English Section was presided over by Miss Andrea W. Mathews, of the Philadelphia High School for Girls.

A paper on "Oral Reading in Its Relation to the Study of English" was presented by Miss Doris T. Wright, of the William Penn High School. Her thesis was that vocal interpretation is the necessary climax of a true study of any work of literature, such interpretation being the best proof that the student has identified himself with the author's thought and feeling. The touch given to certain words, the grouping of words into thought phrases, the pause, the modulations of tone, will be the measure of understanding and appreciation. How can good oral expression be achieved? Vocal interpretation by the teacher does indeed have its place in teaching. It stimulates thought, stirs emotion, and quickens imagination. But this method has, of course, its limits. One must avoid carrying the reading of passages too far, lest the pupil, in his reading, merely imitate. The first step toward good reading is careful preparation of the passage. Interpretation must be preceded by meditation and consequent insight into the author's meaning and emotion. Assignments should be definite; students should know that they will be required to interpret any one of a certain number of passages; or specific passages may be assigned to certain students; or a student may be permitted to make his own choice. Some such plan stimulates interest, and a certain pride of utterance springs into being. It is the business of the teacher to distinguish and develop what is primary and essential, so that improvement may be real and permanent. Question and discussion should therefore not be dispensed with. Promoting, as they do, both understanding and freedom of expression, they are the best of preparation for the oral interpretation that is to follow. A *required* course of two hours of regular oral expression work throughout the first year of high school would undoubtedly prove of inestimable value.

A discussion of Miss Wright's paper followed. Professor Lacy agreed with Miss Wright as to the importance of oral reading as a test

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of the pupil's knowledge. He suggested that more time should be devoted to the subject in the normal schools, so that teachers would go out enabled to awaken, through their own reading, the interest of the student. He also suggested that more hours in the regular high-school course be devoted to reading aloud, and that the attention of the superintendent be called to this suggestion. Miss S. H. Stirling, of the Philadelphia High School for Girls, expressed the opinion that a pupil who is not able to read intelligently very often appreciates. In her opinion, intelligent discussion should not be a mere preliminary to oral expression, but should play a part coequal with reading as a test of the pupil's appreciation. Miss Elizabeth Lodor, in charge of the English work in the William Penn High School, approved very heartily of Miss Wright's suggestion that regular technical training in oral expression be made one of the required subjects in the first year. It would save much to put a dynamic power by this means into the very beginning of high-school work. Mr. Oscar Gerson, of the Boys' Central Manual Training High School, following up a suggestion made by Mr. Lacy that one should avoid a too accurate articulation, made a plea for naturalness and customary use in pronunciation. As teachers of English, we, of course, have to be conservative barriers. We dare not let go of the thing that culture seems to demand, but we are apt to hold on too long to that which is outlived. In some of the schools the broad *a*, which is practically unknown to the ordinary Philadelphia speaker, is insisted on. The correction of mispronounced words should be negative, rather than positive, i.e., students should be warned against the speech and enunciation of the alley and the gutter. Their aim should be to be understood. Much of the stilted and decidedly unnatural gets into our speech, too, from our failing to distinguish the difference in pronunciation between the stressed and the unstressed words. For instance, some teachers insist upon their pupils pronouncing the unstressed "was" as "waz," rather than allowing it to assume its natural unstressed form more nearly "wuz."

The next paper, read by Mr. Vincent B. Brecht, of North East Manual Training High School was on "The Inadequacy of Our Present Provision for the Teaching of English." After calling attention to recent bibliography on the subject, Mr. Brecht spoke specifically of conditions in Philadelphia. He chiefly urged a better correlation of all work in high schools, closer correlation with work of the preceding grades, and a provision of more time for English in the high-school curriculum. The crowding of so much into the time allotted for English

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has a tendency to make the teacher mechanical. Recent statistics were cited, bringing out the fact that the time consumed by the average teacher of English in theme work is twenty-six hours, exclusive of time spent in school. After making a few suggestions for the reducing of time so spent, Mr. Brecht made the general comment that the number of teachers provided should determine the amount of reading and correcting to be done, and that under all circumstances the pupils should come in contact with teachers fully alive.

Miss Dungan, of the Philadelphia High School for Girls, pointed to evidence, to her conclusive, that the best workers in the field are not meeting with a reasonable measure of success in composition teaching. This she ascribed to the conditions under which they are working. When it was decided some decades ago that the old method of studying rhetorical principles was futile, and should be supplanted by practice in writing, the work of the teacher was doubled, no change being made in the number of pupils. Miss Fenimore, of the William Penn High School, told of her experiment along the line of closer correlation with the work done in the elementary schools. She suggested that definite steps be taken to obviate some of the difficulties discussed.

Miss Lodor moved that a permanent organization be formed of the teachers of English in the higher schools of Philadelphia, and that the measures for perfecting such an organization be intrusted to a committee to be appointed by the chairman of the Conference.

This motion was carried, the committee was appointed, and the Conference adjourned.

ELIZABETH LODOR

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

THE SPRING MEETING IN NEW YORK

The New York City Association of High-School Teachers of English held its spring meeting on May 18, with an attendance of about one hundred. The annual election of officers was held, with the following result: *President*, Edwin Fairley, Jamaica; *Vice-President*, Miss Emma F. Lowd, Washington Irving; *Secretary and Treasurer*, Dr. Charles R. Gaston, Richmond Hill. The secretary reported that the association had had the most flourishing year in its history, so far as membership and attendance were concerned.

The general topic of the meeting, as of the year, was "Oral English." Mr. W. W. Fisher, of the Boys' High School, spoke of "Student Criticism of Student Work as Provocative of Oral Discussion." Mr. Fisher insisted that the task of the teacher was made less when the pupils were taught

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to criticize their own themes, and that there was no longer the old-time drudgery of theme-reading. The first thing that was done in his school was to get the entire English department to adopt certain uniform symbols for the most common errors made by students in their written work, and all English teachers had to use the same symbols for those common errors. He told how, after the themes were written, they were returned to their owners a week or so later, and the owners were asked to rate the themes themselves and make corrections. Then boys exchanged their themes, and the various lads marked their neighbor's composition. Finally the teacher read the theme, observing how well the boy himself and the critic had done their work, and gave a final mark. The best pupils in the class formed a committee of critics, which, on occasion, read themes and settled disputes among their classmates. Miss Maude M. Frank, of De Witt Clinton High School, spoke of some experiments she had made in informal classroom dramatizations of the books which often prove dead and dry to pupils. Her address will appear in the *English Journal*. Professor Elmer W. Smith, of Colgate University, discussed "High-School Debating." Mr. Smith declared that a command of the mother-tongue in speaking and writing has a commercial value, and he cited instances of prize debaters who immediately upon graduation obtained excellent positions because of their ability to speak effectively. Debating, he said, is a strenuous preparation for a strenuous life. It teaches habits of self-control to boys who cannot be reached through athletics. Honesty is another valuable lesson taught. By debating, boys learn that truth has many sides and that facts admit of many interpretations. Since students like to work when they play and play when they work, debating with its keen spirit of competition is attractive to them. Mr. Smith believes that young men need civic virtue taught them, not civics, and debate teaches the former.

EDWIN FAIRLEY

NEW YORK CITY

GRAMMATICAL NOMENCLATURE IN NEW JERSEY

The Committee on Uniform Grammatical Nomenclature of the Association of Teachers of English of New Jersey, held a meeting on Saturday, May 11, 1912. As a result of this meeting the committee offers the following preliminary report in the form of resolutions:

1. *Resolved*, That the Association of Teachers of English of New Jersey favor uniformity of Grammatical Nomenclature in all languages studied in the schools.

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2. *Resolved*, That the following be recommended to all concerned.

a) Case Names.

(1) The term *genitive* instead of "possessive."

(2) The term *accusative* instead of "objective." The addition of the term *dative*.

b) Construction Names.

(1) *Predicate adjective* to designate the construction of "good" in the sentence, "He is good."

(2) *Predicate noun* for the construction of the word "captain" in the sentence, "He is captain."

(3) *Factitive adjective* for the construction of the word "red" in the sentence, "He painted the barn red."

(4) *Factitive noun* for the construction of the word "captain" in the sentence, "They elected him captain."

c) The retention of the *subjunctive*, under which will be included the so-called "potential uses" of the verb.

3. *Resolved*, That these recommendations be printed and be sent to the chairman of the joint committee, to the members of this association, to the county superintendents, with a request that the information be published for use, to the principals of the normal schools, and to the principals of the high schools of this state.

W. PATTERSON ATKINSON

JERSEY CITY, N.J.

UNIFORM ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS IN ENGLISH FOR 1915–19

The National Conference[1] held its final meeting in New York on May 30 and adopted the following report:

The Conference voted that the following requirement for the years 1915, 1916, 1917, 1918, and 1919 should be recommended to the constituent bodies for adoption.

This supersedes the previously announced requirement for 1915.

The study of English in school has two main objects: (1) command of correct and clear English, spoken and written; (2) ability to read with accuracy, intelligence, and appreciation.

GRAMMAR AND COMPOSITION

The first object requires instruction in grammar and composition. English grammar should ordinarily be reviewed in the secondary school; and correct spelling and grammatical accuracy should be rigorously exacted in connection with all written work during the four years. The principles of English composition governing punctuation, the use of words, sentences, and paragraphs should be thoroughly mastered; and practice in composition, oral as well as written,

[1] A report of the first meeting of the conference, including a list of the delegates, may be found in the *English Journal* for May, pp. 294–301.

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should extend throughout the secondary school period. Written exercises may well comprise letter-writing, narration, description, and easy exposition and argument. It is advisable that subjects for this work be taken from the student's personal experience, general knowledge, and studies other than English, as well as from his reading in literature. Finally, special instruction in language and composition should be accompanied by concerted effort of teachers in all branches to cultivate in the student the habit of using good English in his recitations and various exercises, whether oral or written.

Literature

The second object is sought by means of two lists of books, headed respectively *Reading* and *Study*, from which may be framed a progressive course in literature covering four years. In connection with both lists, the student should be trained in reading aloud and be encouraged to commit to memory some of the more notable passages both in verse and in prose. As an aid to literary appreciation, he is further advised to acquaint himself with the most important facts in the lives of the authors whose works he reads and with their place in literary history.

A. Reading

The aim of this course is to foster in the student the habit of intelligent reading and to develop a taste for good literature, by giving him a first-hand knowledge of some of its best specimens. He should read the books carefully, but his attention should not be so fixed upon details that he fails to appreciate the main purpose and charm of what he reads.

With a view to large freedom of choice, the books provided for reading are arranged in the following groups, from each of which at least two selections are to be made, except as otherwise provided under Group I.

Group I. Classics in Translation

The *Old Testament*, comprising at least the chief narrative episodes in Genesis, Exodus, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, and Daniel, together with the Books of Ruth and Esther.

The *Odyssey*, with the omission, if desired, of Books i, ii, iii, iv, v, xv, xvi, xvii.

The *Iliad*, with the omission, if desired, of Books xi, xiii, xiv, xv, xvii, xxi.

The *Aeneid*.

The *Odyssey*, *Iliad*, and *Aeneid* should be read in English translations of recognized literary excellence.

For any selection from this group a selection from any other group may be substituted.

Group II. Shakespeare

Midsummer-Night's Dream
Merchant of Venice
As You Like It
Twelfth Night
The Tempest
Romeo and Juliet

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King John	*Coriolanus*	
Richard II	*Julius Caesar*	If not chosen for study under B.
Richard III	*Macbeth*	
Henry IV	*Hamlet*	

GROUP III. PROSE FICTION

Malory: *Morte d'Arthur* (about 100 pages).
Bunyan: *Pilgrim's Progress*, Part I.
Swift: *Gulliver's Travels* (voyages to Lilliput and to Brobdingnag).
Defoe: *Robinson Crusoe*, Part I.
Goldsmith: *Vicar of Wakefield.*
Frances Burney: *Evelina.*
Scott's Novels: any *one.*
Jane Austen's Novels: any *one.*
Maria Edgeworth: *Castle Rackrent*, or *The Absentee.*
Dickens' Novels: any *one.*
Thackeray's Novels: any *one.*
George Eliot's Novels: any *one.*
Mrs. Gaskell: *Cranford.*
Kingsley: *Westward Ho!* or *Hereward, the Wake.*
Reade: *The Cloister and the Hearth.*
Blackmore: *Lorna Doone.*
Hughes: *Tom Brown's Schooldays.*
Stevenson: *Treasure Island*, or *Kidnapped*, or *Master of Ballantrae.*
Cooper's Novels: any *one.*
Poe: *Selected Tales.*
Hawthorne: *The House of the Seven Gables*, or *Twice Told Tales*, or *Mosses from an Old Manse.*
A collection of *Short Stories* by various standard writers.

GROUP IV. ESSAYS, BIOGRAPHY, ETC.

Addison and Steele: *The Sir Roger de Coverley Papers*, or Selections from the *Tatler* and *Spectator* (about 200 pages).
Boswell: Selections from the *Life of Johnson* (about 200 pages).
Franklin: *Autobiography.*
Irving: Selections from the *Sketch Book* (about 200 pages), or *Life of Goldsmith.*
Southey: *Life of Nelson.*
Lamb: Selections from the *Essays of Elia* (about 100 pages).
Lockhart: Selections from the *Life of Scott* (about 200 pages).
Thackeray: Lectures on *Swift, Addison*, and *Steele* in the *English Humorists.*
Macaulay: Any *one* of the following essays: *Lord Clive, Warren Hastings, Milton, Addison, Goldsmith, Frederick the Great, Madame d'Arblay.*
Trevelyan: Selections from the *Life of Macaulay* (about 200 pages).
Ruskin: *Sesame and Lilies*, or *Selections* (about 150 pages).
Dana: *Two Years before the Mast.*

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Lincoln: *Selections*, including at least the two Inaugurals, the Speeches in Independence Hall and at Gettysburg, the Last Public Address, the Letter to Horace Greeley; together with a brief memoir or estimate of Lincoln.

Parkman: *The Oregon Trail.*

Thoreau: *Walden.*

Lowell: *Selected Essays* (about 150 pages).

Holmes: *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table.*

Stevenson: *An Inland Voyage* and *Travels with a Donkey.*

Huxley: *Autobiography* and selections from *Lay Sermons*, including the addresses on *Improving Natural Knowledge, A Liberal Education*, and *A Piece of Chalk.*

A collection of *Essays* by Bacon, Lamb, DeQuincey, Hazlitt, Emerson, and later writers.

A collection of *Letters* by various standard writers.

GROUP V. POETRY

Palgrave's *Golden Treasury* (*First Series*): *Books II and III*, with special attention to Dryden, Collins, Gray, Cowper, and Burns.

Palgrave's *Golden Treasury* (*First Series*): *Book IV*, with special attention to Wordsworth, Keats, and Shelley (if not chosen for study under B).

Goldsmith: *The Traveller* and *The Deserted Village.*

Pope: *The Rape of the Lock.*

A collection of English and Scottish *Ballads*, as, for example, some *Robin Hood* ballads, *The Battle of Otterburn, King Estmere, Young Beichan, Bewick and Grahame, Sir Patrick Spens*, and a selection from later ballads.

Coleridge: *The Ancient Mariner, Christabel*, and *Kubla Khan.*

Byron: *Childe Harold, Canto III or IV*, and *The Prisoner of Chillon.*

Scott: *The Lady of the Lake*, or *Marmion.*

Macaulay: *The Lays of Ancient Rome, The Battle of Naseby, The Armada, Ivry.*

Tennyson: *The Princess*, or *Gareth and Lynette, Lancelot and Elaine*, and *The Passing of Arthur.*

Browning: *Cavalier Tunes, The Lost Leader, How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix, Home Thoughts from Abroad, Home Thoughts from the Sea, Incident of the French Camp, Hervé Riel, Pheidippides, My Last Duchess, Up at a Villa—Down in the City, The Italian in England, The Patriot, The Pied Piper, "De Gustibus—", Instans Tyrannus.*

Arnold: *Sohrab and Rustum*, and *The Forsaken Merman.*

Selections from *American Poetry*, with special attention to Poe, Lowell, Longfellow, and Whittier.

B. STUDY

This part of the requirement is intended as a natural and logical continuation of the student's earlier reading, with greater stress laid upon form and style, the exact meaning of words and phrases, and the understanding of

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allusions. The books provided for study are arranged in four groups, from each of which one selection is to be made.

GROUP I. DRAMA

Shakespeare: *Julius Caesar*, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*.

GROUP II. POETRY

Milton: *L'Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, and either *Comus* or *Lycidas*.
Tennyson: *The Coming of Arthur*, *The Holy Grail*, and *The Passing of Arthur*.
The selections from Wordsworth, Keats, and Shelley in *Book IV* of Palgrave's *Golden Treasury* (*First Series*).

GROUP III. ORATORY

Burke: *Speech on Conciliation with America*.
Macaulay's *Speech on Copyright* and Lincoln's *Speech at Cooper Union*.
Washington's *Farewell Address* and Webster's *First Bunker Hill Oration*.

GROUP IV. ESSAYS

Carlyle: *Essay on Burns*, with a selection from Burns's *Poems*.
Macaulay: *Life of Johnson*.
Emerson: *Essay on Manners*.

EXAMINATION

However accurate in subject-matter, no paper will be considered satisfactory if seriously defective in punctuation, spelling, or other essentials of good usage.

The examination will be divided into two parts, one of which will be on grammar and composition, and the other on literature.

In grammar and composition, the candidate may be asked specific questions upon the practical essentials of these studies, such as the relation of the various parts of a sentence to one another, the construction of individual words in a sentence of reasonable difficulty, and those good usages of modern English which one should know in distinction from current errors. The main test in composition will consist of one or more essays developing a theme through several paragraphs; the subjects will be drawn from the books read, from the candidate's other studies, and from his personal knowledge and experience quite apart from reading. For this purpose the examiner will provide several subjects, perhaps eight or ten, from which the candidate may make his own selections. He will not be expected to write more than four hundred words per hour.

The examination in literature will include:

A. General questions designed to test such a knowledge and appreciation of literature as may be gained by fulfilling the requirements defined under "A. Reading," above. The candidate will be required to submit a list of the books read in preparation for the examination, certified by the principal of the school in which he was prepared; but this list will not be made the basis of detailed questions.

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B. A test on the books prescribed for study, which will consist of questions upon their content, form, and structure, and upon the meaning of such words, phrases, and allusions as may be necessary to an understanding of the works and an appreciation of their salient qualities of style. General questions may also be asked concerning the lives of the authors, their other works, and the periods of literary history to which they belong.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That colleges so desiring may set an examination requiring no prescribed books, but testing the same general kind of preparation as that indicated in the foregoing requirements.

2. That individual colleges take such steps as may be found necessary to ascertain whether candidates for entrance possess an adequate equipment in oral English.

3. That schools should recommend a supplementary list for additional reading. This list may well include suitable selections from contemporary literature and books of local interest.

4. That colleges accept *three* or *four* units of credit for admission in English, the number of credits within these limits to be determined by the preparation of the applicants. It is not recommended that four units of credit be given for the amount of work now submitted for three units. This recommendation has for its object the advancement of English teaching in the secondary schools.

THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION CONFERENCES

Two conferences on English were held at the National Education Association meeting in Chicago, one being the regular Round Table of the Department of Secondary Education and the other a joint conference of secondary schools, normal schools, and colleges. Each was attended by between four and five hundred persons. English seems to be still a very live subject.

The keynote of both meetings was: Increase the efficiency of training in composition and find means of lightening the burden of teaching it. Since most of the papers will appear in future numbers of the *English Journal*, no attempt will here be made to summarize them. Sufficient to say that oral composition came in for the chief emphasis. The joint conference adopted resolutions indorsing the work of the Hopkins committee on composition.

The English Round Table, hereafter to be known as the English Section of the Department of Secondary Education, on Wednesday accepted the report[1] of the Committee on College Entrance Require-

[1] The substance of this report will be found in the *English Journal* for February, 1912.

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ments and requested the Department to continue it, with instructions to co-operate with other similar committees which are at work upon the high-school course in English. This the Department did at its meeting on Friday. Professor Elmer W. Smith, of Colgate University, speaking as chairman of a committee on high-school work in oral expression which is under the direction of the Public Speaking Conference of the New England and the North Atlantic States and also of the Speech Arts Association of America, requested that the National Education Association committee make provision for oral expression as a definite division of its work. The Round Table voted that this be done, and the committee of which Mr. Smith is chairman will join forces with the committee of the Round Table. This makes possible united action on the part of four national committees in preparing a report upon the organization of high-school English. These are: the two named above, the National Council committee, and the Executive Committee of the National Conference, which on May 30 was instructed to co-operate with the National Education Association committee and the Council committee. Steps will be taken at once to organize the joint committee thus constituted for the preparation of a national syllabus, which has been authorized by vote of the Secondary Department of the National Education Association and which the National Commissioner of Education proposes to print and circulate.

All who read this news item are urged to aid the joint committee by sending to the *English Journal*, as soon as possible, their English courses, both high-school and elementary, their syllabi, pamphlets, lists of readings, statistics, and evidences of success or failure, together with a definite statement of the conditions out of which each course has grown or into which it is intended to fit. Letters bearing upon any aspect of the matter are earnestly solicited. A printed blank for the gathering of information is in preparation.

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL IN NOVEMBER

The Executive Committee of the National Council has decided to hold the next meeting in Chicago, November 29 and 30. Let all members take notice and plan to come and to bring others. The important feature of the meeting will be the reports of the committees, seven in number, the chairmen of which are as follows: of the Committee on Grammatical Terminology, Gertrude Buck of Vassar College; Home Reading, Herbert Bates, Manual Training High School, Brooklyn, N.Y.;

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High-School Course in English, James Fleming Hosic, Chicago Teachers College; Equipment, Vincil Carey Coulter, Normal School, Warrensburg, Mo.; Articulation of Elementary and High-School Courses, Ernest C. Noyes, Fifth Avenue High School, Pittsburgh, Pa.; Opinions of Graduates, Wilbur W. Hatfield, Parker High School, Chicago; Pedagogical Investigation, Nathaniel W. Barnes, De Pauw University, Greencastle, Ind. Each of these committees has members from all parts of the country and they are seeking to gather and give expression to the best that is known or is being worked out in the several states and by the various local associations. It is hoped that the reports of the committees may be laid before a convention that is truly representative of all sections and of all sorts of schools, public and private. Further information as to the meeting will be published in the *Journal* from time to time as the program takes shape.

The *Public Speaking Review* has completed its first volume. The board of editors deserve much praise for presenting a creditable and very interesting magazine in spite of great difficulties. The *Review* is published by the authority of the Conference on Public Speaking of the New England and of the North Atlantic States. The president of the conference is Erastus Palmer of the College of the City of New York, and the secretary-treasurer is J. W. Wetzel of Yale University. The editorial board is made up of Paul M. Pearson of Swarthmore College, Allan Davis of the University of Pittsburgh, Frederick B. Robinson of the College of the City of New York, Calvin L. Lewis of Hamilton College, James A. Winans of Cornell University, Robert L. Cumnock of Northwestern University, and Thomas C. Trueblood of the University of Michigan. The *Review* is published at Swarthmore, Pa.

Our British brethren are not to be outdone. The *Journal of English Studies*, Vol. I, No. 1, May, 1912, published by Horace Marshall & Son, London, is at hand. The new magazine is similar to the *English Journal* in purpose and makeup. The first number contains four Leading Articles, Editorial, Current Opinion, Teachers in Council, Reports of Societies, and Reviews. There will be three numbers a year, to correspond to the school terms, published in May, September, and January, at 3*s*. 6*d*. May our rival have long life and much influence for the improvement of English teaching.

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REVIEWS

THE ESSENTIALS OF POETRY

There is something refreshing in the bland way in which Professor Neilson attempts tasks from which all but the boldest would shrink, and in the apparent ease with which he justifies his boldness. Only a little while ago he wrote the Shakespeare number of the English Men of Letters Series, which had never hitherto been attempted, and now he has presented in a series of Lowell Institute essays a little volume on *Essentials of Poetry*,[1] in which he has delivered himself neatly, pressly, and weightily without emptiness or idleness.

The book falls into eight chapters and a brief conclusion. The first of these is upon the "Balance of Qualities," in which the general sanity of the book is promised by the author's refusal to adopt the loose terminology of historical criticism without something in the way of redefinition. Appealing to Bacon, he quotes his division of the human faculties into memory, imagination, and reason, and then points to the respective predominance of each of these over the other two in Realism, Romanticism, and Classicism. By way of further preparation for the whole series, the second chapter briefly discusses "Imagination in Poetry," and illustrates how it may be present, first, in original perception of the objects discussed and, second, in the retrospective interpretation of them.

With these chapters of definition out of the way, there follow three discussions upon "Imagination and Romanticism," "Reason and Classicism," "The Sense of Fact and Realism," and then in three further chapters discussions of "Intensity," "Sentimentalism," and "Humor in Poetry."

A cheerful sanity pervades the entire book. Professor Neilson is not embarrassed nor abashed by the much-confused terms with which he is obliged traditionally to work. He performs one of the most valuable services of genuine criticism in clarifying them sensibly and employing them consistently. At the same time he is not led to commit a common offense of independent critics, in going wantonly out of his way simply for the sake of being different. There is no academic vanity in his method of procedure.

[1] *Essentials of Poetry*. By W. A. NEILSON. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1912. Pp. 274. $1.25.

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As one reads into and through the book, one is impressed with the range of reading from which the illustrations are drawn. The actual number of authors resorted to is not imposing, but their distribution over various schools and periods is wise and equable. Moreover, the author does not seem to be displaying any amiable weakness in "playing favorites." Apparently he has a real liking for good poetry and he finds its goodness with equal pleasure in widely variant characteristics.

One lack, and one only, seems to be regrettable, and that is, that among the "essentials of poetry" Professor Neilson did not feel impelled to treat of the more important details of poetic form. Of general structure he speaks in brief; but of the fascinating subject of versification he takes no account. A discussion of this division would have rounded out the book, and would, without doubt, have been as fresh and simple in treatment, and as illuminating in content, as the other chapters.

Of these it is difficult to write without breaking into superlatives. In my experience, it is the most stimulating volume of American criticism that has appeared since Mr. Woodberry's study of Emerson.

PERCY H. BOYNTON

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

BOOK NOTICES

[Mention under this head does not preclude review elsewhere.]

Folk Festivals. Their Growth and How to Give Them. By MARY MASTER NEEDHAM. New York: B. W. Huebsch, 1912. Pp. 244. $1.25 net.

Contains a record of much practical experience, with historical matter interspersed. The book will prove decidedly useful in normal schools and village communities. It contains a brief bibliography.

Pageants and Pageantry. By ESTHER WILLARD BATES. With an Introduction by WILLIAM ORR. Boston: Ginn & Co., 1912. Pp. 294. Illustrated.

An historical account of pageantry, followed by directions for staging a pageant and by the full texts of the following: *A Roman Pageant; A Mediaeval Pageant; A Colonial Pageant; The Heart of the World; A Pageant of Letters.* There is a fairly full classified bibliography.

Festivals and Plays in School and Elsewhere. By PERCIVAL CHUBB and his associates in the Ethical Culture School, New York. New York: Harpers, 1912. Pp. 403. Illustrated. $2.00 net.

An exhaustive treatment of the festival as a part of school activity. "The Value of the Festival" is presented by Mr. Chubb; "Music in the Festival," by Peter W. Dykema; "Art in the Festival," by James Hall; "Costuming," by Marie R. Perrin; "Dancing," by Mary G. Allerton; "Development in the School Grades," by Mabel Ray Goodlander. The Appendix contains specimen programs, color schemes, specimens of dramatization by children, descriptions (with cost) of costumes, and an extensive bibliography. This is undoubtedly the standard work for schools.

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The Making of Poetry. By ARTHUR H. R. FAIRCHILD. New York: Putnam, 1912. Pp. 263.

A critical study of the nature and value of poetry. Will be reviewed.

English Composition and Style. By WILLIAM T. BREWSTER. New York: The Century Co., 1912. Pp. 512.

A handbook for advanced college students. The theory of composition is illustrated by numerous examples and there are many practical exercises.

Two Years' Course in English Composition. By CHARLES LANE HANSON. Boston: Ginn & Co., 1912. Pp. 377. 90 cents.

A textbook for the first two years of high school.

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VOCATIONAL AND MORAL GUIDANCE THROUGH ENGLISH COMPOSITION

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"To teach men how they may grow independently and for themselves is, perhaps, the greatest service that one man can do for another."—Jowett.

Every pupil who enters the high school presents himself as a candidate for some successful career in life. He may have little or no conception of what that means, but such is the faith of the pupil and his parents that they expect the school will in some way secure for him the much coveted prize. That the schools fail to meet this expectation is evident on all sides. A diploma does not necessarily assure one happiness or wealth: all about us are educated misfits—round pegs in square holes. Discouragement, failure, and crime are the natural results of misguided lives. We have failed to teach men how they may grow independently and for themselves toward a successful career in that calling for which they may be best fitted by nature and preparation.

Realizing the need of directing the work of our pupils along this line, a plan for vocational and moral guidance was originated in the Central High School of Grand Rapids, Mich., about four years ago. The word "guidance" has in this connection a special significance. From the vocational point of view, it means the gradual unfolding of the pupil's better understanding of himself; it means the opening of his eyes to the broad field of opportunity in the world; it means a selection of and a preparation for his own best field of service as a social being. From the moral standpoint,

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the idea of "guidance" is peculiarly essential in the development of the pupil. Ethical instruction that merely informs the brain does not necessarily produce better character. It is of most value when it is in some way applied to the actual thinking and acting of the pupil. In this connection guidance means the better understanding of one's own character; it means an awakening of the moral consciousness that will lead the pupil to emulate the character of the good and great who have gone before; it means a conception of oneself as a social being in some future occupation, and from this viewpoint, the appreciation of one's duty and obligation toward his business associates, toward his neighbors, and toward the law.

In our attempt to aid our pupils to choose their course of study with a degree of wisdom, to give an aim and purpose to their work, and to plan definitely for some vocation for which they seem best fitted, we outlined a plan which we called "Vocational Guidance." It is not often that in an attempt to find a solution for one problem one happens to work out a scheme that proves to be a very satisfactory solution of three perplexing questions. Such, however, was the result in this case, for we found that the plan not only tended to give vocational aim to the high-school course, but, as the work progressed, it developed into a very practical course of moral instruction. Moreover, now that it has been in operation for over three years, we find that it has solved some of the problems of English composition. It is from this point of view that I wish to bring to the attention of teachers of English the opportunity that is theirs, while imparting the technical and literary sides of the subject, to improve their results and at the same time to guide their pupils in systematic courses of instruction that tend to prevent many misfits in life, and that also may be the means of raising the standard of moral efficiency in the coming generation.

The writing of themes by pupils of secondary school age is not exceedingly popular, particularly with the red-blooded, matter-of-fact boy. Work for work's sake does not appeal very strongly to him. The average exercise in English composition upon subjects of more or less questionable interest may have its disciplinary value, but it too often lacks the added value of originality or life

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interest, and the themes rarely leave a lasting impress upon the writer. Each study in the curriculum of today must meet the demand of a very practical civilization. Its cultural value, while fully recognized and appreciated, is not all-sufficient, but to this must be added a practical motive. English composition is no exception to this rule. It may, however, be given a motive that is in the highest sense practical by connecting it with the broader purpose of vocational guidance. Our attempt to accomplish this is what I wish to outline in this paper.

In the Central High School of Grand Rapids, the course in English continues throughout the entire four years. In each grade and class the work is divided into three parts, viz., grammar or rhetoric, composition, and literature. The exercises in composition are both oral and written. Not less than three, and often more, of these exercises are based upon the work in vocational and moral guidance. Such exercises do not supplant all other theme work, for not more than one-fourth of the time given to composition is usually taken for this study. A general outline by semesters is followed, but each teacher is expected to use her own judgment and originality in carrying out the detail of the plan.

FIRST-YEAR TOPIC, ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS IN LIFE

The work of vocational guidance really begins in the eighth grade with the discussion of the value of an education, the reasons for going to high school, and the choice of a course of study in the high school. However, I shall confine my description to the scheme as carried out in the high school. The topic for the first year or ninth grade is called "Elements of Success in Life." The vocational work of the first semester of this year is devoted to the study of the lives of successful men and women for the purpose of discovering the habits of life and work that have contributed to their success. Lists of these characteristics are made and they form the basis for studying the fundamental elements of success. For the pupil to work out for himself these principles of life from a study of the lives of men of all ages, and as a class exercise to make this deduction from such a comparative study, makes a lasting impression of the eternal verity of human virtue. A comparison of the

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opportunities and difficulties of these men and women with those of the pupil forms another very beneficial theme. Each teacher that has a real interest in the plan will develop from this suggestion ideas for both the oral and the written work.

The second semester of this first year is devoted to self-analysis. "Know thyself" is the principal theme. This is possibly the most helpful of all the work when handled wisely. The pupil should not be permitted to dwell upon his own weaknesses or faults, but should be guided in finding his strong points. Individual characteristics such as temperaments, likes and dislikes, experience, special aptitudes, etc., should be brought out in confidential papers to be read and discussed in private with the instructor. This gives the teacher a wonderful opportunity to enter into the great work of guiding and molding lives. By being inspired with confidence in his own ability to do and be something worth while, the pupil can be given a new start that will be made evident in all that he does. For class exercises very interesting topics that will help the pupil to gain an estimate of his present worth may be suggested: "How I could earn my living if I left school now"; "Some employments of boys and girls of my own age"; "Personal adventures"; "The business asset of personal appearance, good manners, cheerfulness," etc.

SECOND-YEAR TOPIC, THE WORLD'S WORK

The first semester of the second year, or tenth grade, is occupied with a survey of the world's work in general. The object of the study is to broaden the pupil's vision of the possible vocations beyond the narrow field of his previous experience. Reports on various occupations for men and for women are read and discussed in class. A card index has been prepared by one class, listing about seventeen hundred different vocations. Such a catalogue, with references and data regarding the status of the particular vocation in the locality, is a very valuable adjunct to the school library. Few pupils of high-school age have any conception of the very large field of opportunity that lies before them. It is quite essential that during their high-school course and before they have gone too far, they should get this wider view of life. By these investi-

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gations a fairly good idea can be gained of the desirability or undesirability of certain vocations. Wages, chance for advancement, health conditions, future growth of the business or profession, and other considerations provide an abundance of material for oral composition.

"*How to Choose a Vocation.*"—The topic, "How to Choose a Vocation," which is made the basis of the second half of the tenth-grade themes, appeals strongly to the pupils. By this time all are vitally concerned with the problem. They now need careful guidance in an attempt to narrow down the number of attractive vocations to the one or two fields which their own peculiar fitness seems to indicate are best. Here must be applied all that has been developed before. The pupil must be led to examine himself again as to his natural ability and tastes; he must make a survey of his opportunities and possibilities, and then must make a careful application of these to the call to service. This is the crowning opportunity of the true teacher to reveal to his students some appealing career, some compelling purpose that will be to them what teaching is to him. An appreciation of the great law of service should be made the ideal of the discussion and theme work in this course. By a possible process of elimination the pupil may be led to decide upon some vocation or some special line of future activity for which he is now to make definite preparation.

THIRD-YEAR TOPIC, PREPARATION FOR LIFE'S WORK

The beginning of the third year in the high school is the critical time in the life of every student. It is here that he must know whether he is to elect the subjects that will prepare him to meet the college-entrance requirements, or those that will best fit him for a commercial or industrial career. It is also at this period that a large number drop out because they have no real purpose in attending school and are tempted to take the first apparently good position that offers itself. If the work of the previous semester has been fairly successful it will be evident in the interest with which the pupils undertake to plan the steps by which they may reach the goal of their ambitions. For this purpose it is quite essential that the school library be well equipped with catalogues

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of all kinds of schools and colleges and with such material as may be obtained relating to commercial and industrial conditions.

Business and professional ethics.—By the last half of the third year the pupil either has chosen a definite vocation or has a general field toward which he is working. He can profitably take time here to consider the ethics of his calling. Interesting debates can be developed out of the problems of modern business methods. Each profession has its peculiar code, which should be well understood by those thinking of entering it. The relation of employer and employee, rebating, promoting of stock companies, the moral responsibility of the professional man toward his client, and many other topics, will suggest themselves as valuable themes in this grade.

FOURTH-YEAR TOPIC, SOCIAL ETHICS

The individual and society, from the point of view of the chosen or assumed vocation, is the central thought running through the themes of the first semester of the senior year. Why should I, the professional or business man, be interested in the public schools, the slums, social settlements, the church, the Y.M.C.A., or other fields of social service? What do I owe to the community in which I live? How can I improve the moral conditions in my neighborhood? Other similar topics will also suggest themselves to the teacher who catches the spirit of the work.

During the second semester, the themes take the relation of the individual to the state from the same vocational point of view. The call for business and professional men in politics, or the "new patriotism" as described by Josiah Strong, sounds the keynote for the discussions. A few suggestive themes will indicate the trend of the written work as follows: My profession or my business and the law; The effect of a well-governed city upon business; Why should I be willing to pay taxes? What is meant by the "patriotism of peace"? This plan gives a concreteness to the discussion of social ethics that is very desirable. The impression is lasting and it is personal in its application.

This brief description of the course in vocational and moral guidance is but an outline of the portion of the scheme applied to

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the department of English. Other departments are co-operating where possible, and the teachers known as grade principals or session room teachers are trained advisers in the work of vocational counseling. The principal of the school is the chief counselor and a vocational bureau of business men complete the broader plan.

To give any tangible report of the results of our four years of effort in this work is very difficult. They are more intellectual and spiritual than material and cannot be estimated by statistics. We no longer consider vocational guidance as an experiment but as an established part of the curriculum. One must mingle with the pupils and the teachers to appreciate the spirit of the institution. The work has at least eliminated a large proportion of the drifters who were the troublesome element of the school; it has reduced discipline to an almost negligible quantity. While each pupil may not have chosen a definite career, he is at least taking life more seriously; he is making the attempt to find that thing which he must do if he is to fulfil his ideals.

TESTIMONY OF PUPILS

In order that I might bring you the testimony of the pupils themselves who have just completed the course, I asked them to answer briefly and frankly the question, "How has this vocational study helped you?" They were assured that there was nothing personal to me in the question and that all that I desired was a truthful statement of the impression that they had received from the work. A few characteristic replies will indicate the general attitude:

"It broadened my view of things that I could do in the world."

"It has made me realize the need of planning for a career."

"It has aided me chiefly in showing me what I ought not to do."

"It has given me a working plan for my daily tasks."

From the moral standpoint the following replies are significant:

"It has kept the thought of what I was to do when I finished school constantly before me, and I have studied harder and with greater purpose."

"The character of the study helped me most, as I realize that there are changes in my character that I must try to make."

"Never having had to think of earning my own living, I had not thought much about vocations; but when compelled to write on one, I began to think,

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and I realized how little I was equal to doing anything. I am seeing life in a different light now, and I am more considerate of others because I can put myself in their places."

TESTIMONY OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

The twelve teachers of English in the Central High School of Grand Rapids are enthusiastic over the results of the work in their classes. From their reports I have selected a few statements as to the effect in composition:

"The vocational themes insure originality of composition and provide subjects of vital everyday interest."

"The students now feel that the study of English is of practical value."

"The pupils enter the advanced classes with an uncommon interest and earnestness of spirit."

"The themes are well adapted to the various forms of composition and we have seemed to get much more out of them than ever before."

The opinion of the teachers regarding the vocational value of the themes is indicated in the following expressions:

"It has undoubtedly prevented some misfits in the choice of vocations."

"It has stopped several of my pupils who were drifting."

"Even though it may not determine a pupil's actual vocation it adds inestimably to his outlook on life and his attitude toward work, and makes for bigger and better lives."

The moral sentiment can hardly be separated from the vocational. Each teacher is very positive of the ethical value of both the oral and written themes. They report:

"It gives an opportunity to use the pupil's ambition as a lever to lift him away from harmful habits and to strengthen his character."

"The pupils appreciate the fact that character counts in practical life."

"They give evidence of a higher sense of honor, a finer feeling for others and a better understanding of what is necessary to make good."

Perhaps the one bit of testimony that expresses more than all the rest is this: "It makes the teacher feel that she is doing more than teaching English; that she is having a share in the wonderful work of molding lives."

This last statement sounds the keynote of the entire plan. The demand for a practical course of moral instruction in the public schools and particularly in the high school has been urgent

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for many years. It is not effective when taught as a course in formal ethics; it fails to reach those who need it most when made elective; it is not personal or practical when taught in the abstract; and it does not give time for growth when given as a single semester course. Through four years of composition work in the department of English, all of these difficulties are surmounted, and furthermore, the pupils are getting the moral training, not as such, but as a part of practical preparation for life. With the wide choice of subjects in the cosmopolitan high school, with the diversity of entrance requirements for technical schools and colleges, and with the need of a closer relationship between the public schools and the commercial and industrial community that supports them, comes this most positive demand. We are called upon to guide and prepare those who are to go out into the numerous ways in life in a manner that will eliminate the misfits and that will make for a greater efficiency in every vocation. In no department of the high school nor by any other means can these most vital problems be so satisfactorily solved as in the department of English, the great backbone of the American high-school curriculum. And best of all, in rendering this noble service, there comes in return the well-deserved reward of increased efficiency in the department itself.

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THE TEACHING OF LYRIC POETRY

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In Mr. C. M. McConn's recent study of "Students' Rankings of English Classics"[1] we find Palgrave's *Golden Treasury* standing thirty-third in popularity among the forty-one books there included. Just how far such a ranking should be taken as a gauge of our efficiency in teaching the lyric is hard to determine; but it does support the belief that some suggestions regarding methods of studying this type of literature may not prove amiss. I purpose here to offer some hints based largely upon my own experience in the classroom. I shall offer no apology for speaking very frankly of these experiences, for only by so doing, I am persuaded, are we likely to be of any assistance to one another.

First of all, then, let us consider briefly why so many instructors have found the lyric difficult to teach. Two obvious answers to this question at once present themselves: First, many teachers have not been so adequately trained in the study of the lyric as in that of the drama or the novel. By their very nature these latter forms lend themselves with fair readiness to comparatively elaborate schemes of treatment and present certain definite points of attack that are wanting in the lyric. Again, the lyric appeals primarily to the emotions rather than to the intellect; consequently, some instructors have gone so far as to declare that it is impossible to teach this form of poetry. Of course their whole contention here centers around the interpretation of the word *teach;* but inasmuch as it is obviously possible for the more highly trained instructor, with his finer appreciation, wider range of experience, and knowledge of technique, to bring his students to a fuller appreciation and a keener enjoyment of a poem, the whole matter becomes largely one of nomenclature; and we are justified, I believe, in using the word *teach* to describe the process in question.

[1] See *The English Journal* for May, 1912.

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The exact boundaries of the lyric are hard to define. For our purposes, however, we may well accept the common and rather convenient definition, "A lyrical poem is a brief expression in musical verse of an emotion either of the writer or of someone with whom the writer identifies himself through sympathy." At the same time, we must recognize that, as Palgrave has pointed out in the preface to the *Golden Treasury*, "some poems usually regarded as lyrics, such as Gray's 'Elegy,' the 'Allegro' and 'Penseroso,' Wordsworth's 'Ruth,' and Campbell's 'Lord Ullin,' may be claimed with perhaps equal justice for a narrative and a descriptive selection." In this discussion I believe we may well be somewhat catholic and extend the term lyric to include much of the verse lying along the borders of our particular form. For our purpose we may also make use of many poems, especially those by Americans, not to be found in the little red-backed Palgrave with which most teachers arm their classes.

The assignment of lessons, especially of the earlier ones, requires very careful consideration. Most students are willing to prepare their lessons in English just as carefully as they do those in Cicero or in geometry, but all too frequently they are at a loss to know just what is expected of them. Sometimes they give the poems a more or less careful reading, use their Webster for the unfamiliar words and their Brewer for the allusions; then they close their Palgrave and betake themselves to fresh woods and pastures new. To meet the needs of just such students, the skilful teacher will devote at least a portion of each class hour, and that not always the last few hurried minutes, to the assignment of the next lesson. From visiting a great many schools within the last few years I have become convinced that all too frequently the teacher considers the anthology as three hundred pages to be taken in fifteen doses, twenty pages a lesson, and gives little or no attention to grouping for one day's discussion, let us say, several of Shakspere's sonnets, or some of the various war lyrics which offer such excellent chances for comparative study, or the beautiful and somewhat impudent love lyrics of the Cavaliers, which are as typical of their grace of manner as of their general attitude toward life. Too many teachers exhibit a servile regard for an order established by

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some textbook writer, and seem to consider it somewhat of a sacrilege to rearrange the material the better to suit their particular needs.

Again, the teacher's skill in assigning a lesson appears not only in his selection and rearrangement of the lyrics, but also in the choice of the preparatory material which he places before his students, to interest them and to help them toward an understanding of the morrow's lesson. Thus he will be careful to give them, when occasion demands, something of the setting of the newly assigned poem; or he may direct them to sources where they may learn more of the writer; or he may propose questions designed, perhaps, to challenge their curiosity, to suggest the excellences and the defects of the poem, or to bring home its significance. For example, I have found it well worth while with such poems as Bryant's "Waterfowl," Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale," Tennyson's "Crossing the Bar," and dozens of others, either to tell the class something of the history of their composition, or to tease the students with hints that will send them to look up these matters for themselves. Such an instance, to choose one of many, is to call attention in assigning the "Ode to a Nightingale" to the line,

> No hungry generations tread thee down,

and to suggest that something in Keats's life may help in interpreting this particular passage. Or again, in preparing to discuss Rossetti's "Blessed Damozel," I have given pupils Mr. Hall Caine's well-known statement regarding Rossetti's indebtedness to Poe's "Raven" and have asked for a comparison of the two poems. Then, too, the teacher may occasionally suggest some source of a lyric and ask for a comparison between the poem studied and this source; as, for example, What does the "Penseroso" owe to the song in Fletcher's "Nice Valour"? or, What was Vaughn's influence upon Wordsworth's great "Ode"? or, How did Sidney expand his beautiful "My True Love Hath My Heart," which he enlarged to a sonnet and inserted in the text of his *Arcadia;* and did he thus improve it? Again, questions which send the pupil to a larger text, and thus tempt him to further reading, are especially worth seeking and using. Thus, such lyrics as "Where the Bee Sucks"

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may induce even the lazier members of the class to spend some time with *The Tempest.* I have frequently enjoyed asking pupils studying Shakspere's lyrics, whether the singer of "Take, O Take Those Lips Away" is a man or a woman; then, after allowing the discussion to wax warm for a while, as it invariably does, to send them to *Measure for Measure* for the answer. Other questions regarding the structure, content, and mood of the poem will be suggested later.

So far as my observation goes, most teachers begin the study of the lyric by asking some member of the class to read; and such a method has certain obvious advantages. I was impressed not long since with the success of a teacher who, in taking up one of the old ballads, had one student repeat the principal part, while the class joined in the refrain, "Binnorie, O Binnorie," thus reverting to something like primitive conditions. I have, however, sometimes visited classes where the reading, whether of a lyric, of a play, or of a novel, seemed valuable chiefly as a means of killing the class hour; and the students were allowed to read in a careless, catch-as-catch-can fashion, without being held strictly to account. No other form of literature, I believe, is likely to repay reading and repeated reading aloud more thoroughly than does the lyric; but it is also equally true that no other form is more easily spoiled by poor reading. Nor should the teacher invariably begin by reading for the class the poem to be discussed, as I have seen many instructors do. Such a method is as little appetizing as to enter a boarding-house on Friday noons knowing that fried fish, mashed potatoes, and canned peas are inevitable. The live teacher has many methods of approaching the day's lesson.

One thing necessary, of course, is to discover early in the hour whether the class has grasped the poem from the intellectual side. Most teachers are thoroughly painstaking in seeing that students apprehend the meanings of words and understand the allusions of the poem. The laurels, the myrtles, and the ivy; the fauns and satyrs; Hippotades, Neptune, and the Pilot of the Galilean lake—these must be understood if the student is to appreciate "Lycidas." But all too frequently the teacher places an exaggerated emphasis upon such points and goes about his task much as his fellow-instructor

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in Latin asks the pupils to close the books while he proceeds to discover whether they have learned their *ambulo* and *laudo*, *exercitus* and *dies*, and the dozen other new words at the beginning of that particular lesson. Of course, the English instructor must be sure that words and allusions have been properly mastered; but by firmly insisting for a few days upon this requirement, and by judiciously determining from day to day how thorough has been the preparation of the lazy squad—the submerged tenth or fifth of every class—and then holding delinquents strictly to account, he may in time dispense with any recitation upon a considerable part of this largely mechanical work. The teacher must exercise ceaseless vigilance, however, in seeing that the students are faithfully carrying out this part of the work; though he may frequently learn what use they are making of such reference books as Gayley's *Classic Myths*, Brewer's *Hand Book*, and the *Century Dictionary of Names* without a daily test of each minute detail. Furthermore, we must ever remember that the mythology and allusions are useful as aiding us to understand the poem, and that "Lycidas" is not valuable, primarily, as an excuse for knowing Orpheus and Eurydice.

Frequently, in conducting a lesson in the lyric, the teacher contents himself with asking the student first to read, perhaps, one stanza and then to explain what he has read, following this method with monotonous regularity throughout the hour. "Read and explain," "Read and explain," "Read and explain" strike the ear with the dull regularity of a cricket's chirp on a rainy night in autumn. No one realizes more fully than I do, I trust, the importance of seeing that pupils have grasped the thought of the day's lesson. Sometimes a passage must be examined "line upon line, and precept upon precept." Thus, before a student can appreciate Keats's fine lines that begin the "Ode on a Grecian Urn," he must examine them carefully, weighing the force of each word; and I, for one, am not afraid that such an examination will spoil for him the beauty of the poem. But I do feel most strongly that we must exercise greater skill than is sometimes shown in dealing with this part of the lesson. Occasionally the central thought of the poem has been summarized in some one of its lines, which the students may well be asked to discover. In this connection Herrick's

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"Corinna's Maying" and Emerson's "The Rhodora" come to memory. Sometimes the explanation of certain phrases affords all the comment necessary to the complete understanding of the entire poem. At times the import of a poem is imbedded in a single phrase, the meaning of which may be made clear by reading it aloud several times, at each reading throwing the accent upon a different word. Occasionally a comparison of the reading of the line as it is given in the text with its variations in other editions is suggestive, as in Lowell's "Climbs to a Soul for Grass and Flowers," or in the "unbodied" and "embodied" "joy" of the first stanza of Shelley's "To a Skylark."

In his attempts to bring a class to a clearer apprehension of the thought of a poem, the teacher sometimes places too great stress upon the different lines and fails to give due emphasis to the poem as a whole. As the lyric is shorter than certain other forms of literature, it is less likely to transgress the laws of unity; but the skilful teacher will frequently consider with the class whether the poem possesses organic and formal unity. Is Daniel's "Since There's No Help" materially weakened by the change of tone in the last two lines? How is the humor of Bryant's "Robert of Lincoln" increased by the incongruity of tone and subject-matter? How does the carrying out of a single conceit affect the unity of Lyly's "Cupid and My Campaspe"? How is the unity of Longfellow's sonnet on *Milton* increased by the parallel movement of its two component sentences? What devices contribute both to the unity of structure and the unity of thought in Shakspere's *Sonnet LXXIII*, "That Time of Year Thou May'st in Me Behold," to Dekker's "Happy Heart," and to Goldsmith's "When Lovely Woman Stoops to Folly"? What is the effect of the Lincoln stanza upon the unity of Lowell's "Harvard Commemoration Ode"? These and a hundred other similar questions suggest themselves as topics in which the students become intensely interested, and through which they greatly increase their appreciation of poetic form. Thus, too, they may come to realize the unity arising from artistic restraint and suggestion, as in Wordsworth's "She Dwelt among the Untrodden Ways"; or they may see that in the matter of knowing just how much to say Bryant

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occasionally gains as much from his compression as Whittier loses through his diffuseness. Sometimes an analysis of the poem, such as is suggested for "L'Allegro" in Chubb's *Teaching of English*, or the divisions of the "Deserted Village" given in Phillips' *Manual of English Literature*, is helpful; though we must ever remember that such an analysis is only a means toward the much greater end of understanding and appreciating the lyric as a whole.

In bringing students to such an appreciation, however, the teacher's greatest task lies in interpreting the verses so that the pupils may catch the author's emotion, that great *sine qua non* of the lyric. Here in the lesson of the day are half a dozen different verses, each permeated with the writer's feelings—how may the student be brought to appreciate them? Horace's old advice, If you wish me to weep, you must first weep yourself, applies no less to the teacher than it does to the author. The instructor who knows thoroughly and loves deeply the lyrics he teaches may accomplish much through his own fine attitude toward these poems he would have the student appreciate. Here is a beautiful lyric you have enjoyed and loved; you would have the class love it too. Read it aloud, reread, and have the class read with you. If repetition is the mother of studies, she may claim lyric poetry as a favorite child. All of us know how infectious is the latest popular song, and how, in spite of ourselves, we hum and sing it, sometimes to the weariness of both ourselves and of our friends. Well, lyric poetry may be made almost equally infectious and a thousand times more beneficial.

In spite of the protests of some of my colleagues, I am old-fashioned enough to believe thoroughly in the efficacy of class reading, especially of such poems as combine unusual musical sweetness and charm of movement with the more ethereal emotions. For example, the beautiful movement and delicate emotion, much like a single cloud upon a bright June afternoon, that mark Herrick's "To Daffodils," may well be imparted by the teacher's first reading the poem sympathetically and then asking the class to read with him; or, to cite a still better case, by repeated readings in concert a class may be brought, as in no other way I at least have ever discovered, to something of a realization of Shelley's divine yearnings

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in the last stanza of the "Ode to the West Wind." "But," I hear a certain friend object, "such reading too frequently works like Jones's famous team, where one horse was willing to do all the pulling, and the other was perfectly willing that it should." This difficulty, however, may be obviated by care on the part of the teacher, who may accomplish much by a little well-directed encouragement and enthusiasm, by a judicious use of that most effective of monitors, the eye, in quickening the pace of the less zealous, and by a verbatim knowledge of the poem, which will enable him not only to enter more fully into the spirit of the lyric but also to give his almost undivided attention to the work of the class.

Furthermore, by knowing the text the teacher sets a very wholesome example for inspiring the students to commit to memory those best passages of lyric poetry, which are of immense value as "touchstones," to use Matthew Arnold's convenient word, in forming their taste. Occasionally one finds a pupil who seems utterly incapable of committing to memory, and to such shorn lambs the wind must be tempered. "Cudgel not thy dull ass, for he will not mend his pace with beating." But such cases are comparatively rare; and the memory work may be made a joy, if the teacher will at the very outset deal promptly and effectively with the student offering a half committed quotation and will train the class in the vocal interpretation of these memory passages. One device I have found helpful in this connection is to devote a part of an hour to discussing with the class the matter of spending one's odd moments to best advantage. I try to point out how much of our modern wealth arises from the utilization of by-products which were formerly wasted; and I have thus led up to a consideration of how each of us has certain vacant moments, in the mornings, on the way to classes, at night, which may well be utilized either in enjoying passages we have already learned, or in committing new ones. Such talks are, I know, of much value to certain students who are perfectly willing to work, but who have never learned such devices for making their work most effective. Of course all the devices and the helps in the world will not make every member of the class an enthusiastic student of lyric poetry; but I believe that "the number of such as may be saved" is larger than we

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sometimes realize; and in such students lies the joy which must be a part of our recompense.

In making assignments of memory passages we may well vary our methods, sometimes indicating the passage ourselves, sometimes asking the class as a whole to assist in the selection, and again allowing each student to choose his own lines. The method last mentioned has the advantage of affording the discriminating teacher valuable evidence as to the growth of each student's appreciation. In this work of committing, repetition must play an important part, for all too often students are allowed to prepare a certain number of lines for the day and then to forget them as rapidly as they learned them. A few minutes of each period, or an occasional hour, are time well spent, both for refreshing the memory and for renewing the pleasure of a beautiful passage. After all, though, the most potent factor in securing good memory work is the enthusiastic and excellent example of the teacher himself. If he has committed but little of the best verse and recites it in an uncertain and inaccurate manner, if he does not love to return time after time in his spare moments to such noble passages as "Our Birth Is but a Sleep and a Forgetting," how can he expect to bring his classes to know and to love these better things?

> But Cristes lore, and his apostles twelve,
> He taughte, and first he folwed it him-selve.

How to deal with the student who shows in his memory work that he has failed to catch the mood of the author, is sometimes a problem. Occasionally one must stop such a student and try to bring him to an emotional appreciation of the passage he is mutilating. Of course one must not expect the pupil to bring to the interpretation of every poem an immense emotional appreciation; such ripeness, if it is ever ours, comes to most of us only with the passing of years. But on the other hand, the few great emotions by which we live are comparatively common property. Even if a student does not understand certain phases of life, he has usually known some emotion in good measure parallel to that expressed by the poet, which will help him to enter into the spirit of the verses before him. Thus, for most high-school students, life is forward

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looking; but they all know the meaning of regret and, after a little skilful suggestion on the part of the teacher, thoroughly enjoy such verses as Lamb's "Old Familiar Faces." Indeed, few lyrics appeal so strongly to students as does Shakspere's "That Time of Year Thou May'st in Me Behold." In this connection I recall very vividly the lesson I once learned from a county superintendent in a country school lying along what most of us would call the borders of civilization. It happened that we visited this school just as one of the pupils was reading in a high sing-song voice Whittier's "Blessings on Thee, Little Man." The superintendent stood it for a time and then asked one of the boys whether there were any wild strawberry patches in the neighborhood. The teacher looked up in astonishment at such a question. It had never occurred to her thus to arouse the sympathy, interest, and appreciation of the class. After the superintendent had discussed the poem with the students and vitalized it, he then asked the pupil to reread the verses—with results that may easily be imagined.

[*To be continued*]

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DRAMATIZATION OF SCHOOL CLASSICS[1]

MAUDE M. FRANK
DeWitt Clinton High School, New York

A neighborly colleague, who occasionally brings me chips from his workshop, told me the other day that one of his boys who had failed to prepare his *Ivanhoe* lesson had offered the excuse that he didn't like *Ivanhoe* because it was too stylish. Now, the boy or girl who finds *Ivanhoe* too stylish looms very large on the horizon of the English teacher today. Literature, in the scholar's sense of the word, is facing the challenge of the magazine and the newspaper, not only in the home but in the English classroom. The demand for literature that will interest must be met. On that point we are all, I think, agreed, though the dust of battle has darkened the air of late in controversies as to how to bring about the meeting between our Mahomets and our mountain.

One simple method of procedure is, of course, to give the pupil books that he will find attractive and that will not, like *Ivanhoe*, intimidate him by their excess of stylishness—the best, perhaps, of the books of the day and the hour. I should like to say something about the possibility of approaching the problem from a different angle. If we shift the emphasis from medium to method, there is, I believe, a fighting chance of making the pupil like a good deal of what has permanent value, and a strong hope that the goal of interest may be attained without our being compelled to substitute the harmlessly entertaining and the pleasantly popular for "the things that are most excellent."

I do not wish to present a plea for the retention of all that has belonged to the last pedagogical generation in the teaching of our subject. I am quite aware that we have frequently been guilty of cruelty to literature. But there is some danger that, in the violence of our reaction, we may get rid not only of our bad methods

[1] Delivered before the New York City Association of Teachers of English, May 18, 1912.

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but of much good boy-and-girl literature as well—which seems a little like burning down the house to drive out the rats. Because our literature lessons have sometimes been nine-tenths teacher and one-tenth pupil, because we have been meticulous and have perhaps taught *Ivanhoe* by asking such questions as, "If the tournament took place on October fourth, give the dates of the archery contest, the storming of Torquilstone, and the banquet at Ashby," it should not, in expiation of our sins, be necessary to do penance by resolving to have no further traffic with the people of Scott's world.

I should like to see, as a result of the new light that has dawned for many of us, the books that we English teachers care for, not only with the maturity of our intellect as men and women, but also with the spirit of youth that must persist in us if we care at all, given a final chance before being dismissed as enemies to the happiness of our young people. And it is chiefly for the sake of our beginners that I should like to see the chance given, since so many leave us after the first year, and since, whether they go or stay, their attitude toward books is pretty clearly determined by that time. It is, therefore, about work with first-year pupils that I wish to speak, with the specific purpose of discussing certain devices for adding interest to the work of that year.

When I say that I have found the dramatic method capable of being used to excellent advantage in the teaching of first-year literature, I speak with fear and trembling, for the words *dramatic* and *dramatization* on a teacher's lips too often suggest, if not pretentiousness of aim, a lack of sense of values in effort. Dramatic colors for use in the classroom need to be mixed with as much common sense as the teacher is master of, to be worth a canvas. In default of a better word, however, I must perforce make use of the term dramatization, trusting not to convey the impression that the English class should be used for the exploitation of star reciters or youngsters with leanings toward theatricalism. On the contrary, dramatics as part of the literature period ought to result in making the class a democracy rather than an aristocracy or an oligarchy. It should, perhaps, hardly be necessary to say that the method in question requires no special temperamental qualification on the teacher's part, such as that possessed by the faculty dramatic

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coach. The common, or garden, teacher who has for equipment nothing more than the interest in the drama that no one of us lacks can, after a very little practice, play the impresario without difficulty.

In the first term *Ivanhoe* and in the second *The Odyssey* have been the chief victims of my recent experiments. Two years ago, I found some *Ivanhoe* classes in my program, after having, through some accident of fate, been without *Ivanhoe* work for some time. I have a wise English friend, once a schoolmaster, who is a great traveler, although his holidays are never longer than a few weeks. He writes delightful essays about his travels, and in one of them he says: "I will never go the same route three days running, whether to business or to Parliament, or back to the haven of home. Monotony—monotony is the lurking demon to outwit and avoid; monotony ages you; wandering keeps you young." Now, I thoroughly believe in applying this principle to teaching. I try never to take precisely the same route through a book two terms running, and this time, in search of a new road, I strayed upon the path of informal dramatics arranged from *Ivanhoe*. That is to say, the first part of every lesson was devoted to a rendering of the dialogue of one of the scenes by as many pupils as the action called for. The planning of this work is exceedingly simple, thanks to Scott. There are innumerable scenes in *Ivanhoe* which, with the slightest possible twist, can be converted into self-contained dramatic episodes. The archery contest, the escape of Cedric, Gurth at the house of Isaac, the friar and the Black Knight in the hermitage, Gurth among the robbers—a score of others will suggest themselves to you, and the whole book can be gone through in this way down to the final scene of the leave-taking between Rebecca and Rowena. When our allotted time with the book was over, every member of both classes, bright or dull, weak-voiced or declamatory, had had a part to perform, only slightly removed from a thinking part in some cases, but still a part. I don't know which was the greater revelation to me in this experience, the perfect Golconda of dramatic material in *Ivanhoe* or the rough, but in many cases, real power displayed by the boys in handling it. As for the boys' point of view, which, after all, is the one that matters, I don't believe they

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formulated any criticism, but I am sure that they lived their *Ivanhoe*.

This type of work calls for isolation of the dialogue, memorizing the speeches whenever they are not unduly long—in that case cutting them judiciously—and thinking out appropriate action. The memorizing sounds like much more of a task than it really is. As a famous critic said of the allegory in *The Faerie Queene*, it won't bite anyone. The lines almost say themselves. As for the action, all the classroom's a stage, and all its belongings, properties. Richard and Friar Tuck contentedly quaff canary from ink-wells; Gurth and the Miller have a bout with pointers as quarter-staves; the seats on the middle aisle provide places for Prince John's banqueters, and a fearful joy is snatched from the invasion of the teacher's platform, which serves now as the ruins of Torquilstone, now as the cave of Polyphemus, according to the requirements of the occasion. I might perhaps add that thinking parts, such as the swine of Circe and the suitors of Penelope (who are allowed modified growls) are very popular and are felt to contribute greatly to the effectiveness of the performance. Occasionally, of course, it is thought that some slight accessory ought to be imported from the outer world. At present, the most approved instrument for boring out the eye of Polyphemus is an ancient baseball bat, the property of the class team, and my first impersonator of Gurth profoundly impressed his audience by producing his father's check-book and solemnly recording therein his monetary transactions with Isaac. And so, like the audiences who saw Agincourt fought and won on the platform of the Globe Theater, we "sit and see, minding true, things by what their mockeries be."

Our incursion into the dramatic field by way of *Ivanhoe* called for no work in composition, but with *The Odyssey* there are more opportunities for making oral composition a part of the exercises. Renderings of the *Odyssey* dialogues, as they appear in the text, are practicable but require considerable effort in memorizing, and when this type of work becomes burdensome to the pupil it loses its value, to my mind. In this case it is as Stevenson says, "To miss the joy is to miss all." The Homeric deities seldom express themselves with the terseness which would commend their speeches

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to the New York high-school boy as suitable passages to be learned. I have, therefore, tried in my *Odyssey* classes to kill several birds with one stone by having the boys manage their own dramatizations. Making a bold attempt to transplant the methods of the Italian *improvisatore* to the classroom, I have had groups of boys work out into dialogue form, sometimes impromptu, sometimes as assigned exercises, incidents given in the text in third person narrative; or again, they have manipulated incidents developed in the text but requiring adaptation or condensation. A special armor of temporary insensitiveness needs, by the way, to be added to the teacher's equipment during these experiments; curious infelicities in the way of combinations of Homeric epithets and up-to-date New Yorkese occur not infrequently. A method of relating these exercises to written composition is to have the incidents developed into written dialogue by the entire class. Several of the most successful compositions may be rendered and the critical faculty sharpened by instituting comparisons. It should be understood that no one of these exercises need occupy more than ten minutes, and that no unduly sustained effort is required.

Summing up the advantages which I believe to be derived from the judicious use of simple dramatic work in the teaching of literature, I should say, first, that it makes the literature belong to the pupils in a very real way. Characters are not remote to the boy who has impersonated them or dealt with them in objective fashion. Ulysses and Wamba cease to be mere names to the pupils under those circumstances; they are gentlemen of their acquaintance. Then it furnishes an opportunity for self-expression —which needs no pedagogical justification. The fact that every member of the class can take part in work of this type differentiates it from the more careful and finished rendering which constitutes the fine flower of school dramatics. Undoubtedly the boys themselves recognize the difference between their own attempts and the achievements of the best-trained actors of the school, but, though their classroom performance may be a poor thing, it is their own, and, unlike Gellet Burgess' lyric hero, they would rather be than see one. They have, too, more of a footing in the world of the imagination for having had some share, however slight, in its doings,

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just as we all like to believe that the horny-handed men of Athens were broader-minded citizens for having paid their dramatic tribute to the Duke. A by-product of the work is the improvement of the vocabulary through memorizing speeches, not as dead extracts to be recited to the teacher and then blissfully dismissed from the mind, but as fragments of a slice of life.

Lastly comes the gain in interest. I can quote no direct expression of opinion on the part of my boys. I have purposely made no definite inquiries. But, as a skilful swimmer instinctively knows when he is making his way successfully through his chosen element, so a teacher to whom some years of experience have brought a certain sensitiveness to reactions will know whether the day is lost or won; and above all, he will know whether the voice that is heard in the land is the voice of the sluggard or the voice of the willing worker. What I have tried to do with this first-year work is, as I hope I have succeeded in making plain, very unpretentious, and my results have been sufficiently crude; but, at least, the joy of living has not been absent from the classroom during the process, and that, perhaps, may be counted as gain.

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HOW CAN THE UNIVERSITY BE OF MORE HELP TO THE SECONDARY SCHOOL?[1]

CLARENCE STRATTON
Central High School, St. Louis, Mo.

The university can be of most help to the high school by raising the standard of entrance requirements in English. This has been done by the university in some other departments. Applicants for the law and medical courses have to fulfil today requirements which ten years ago would have stopped at the beginning a horde of pettifoggers and quacks. One principal of my acquaintance refuses to certify for admission to the Cornell Engineering School unless the high-school graduate has made above 90 per cent in mathematics, confident that in the long run this insistence on high attainment will benefit his entire mathematical department. A complete acceptance of this position in other departments will do more to advance the standard of high-school studies than anything else I can now bring to mind, except, perhaps, the securing of better faculties and more capable, enthusiastic teaching as the return for higher salaries.

Of course, it is quite true that high schools do not exist merely to prepare pupils for college. Their primary aim—and the representatives of the universities will permit me to say this—their most important aim is training for good citizenship. By this test of an ever-rising standard our high schools are now being judged. A mother wails that her daughter does not care for good books; a father finds fault because his son has been taught to make a clay elephant if he feels in the mood for doing it, though he cannot express himself intelligently, nor cipher accurately; and *Life* prints as "News of the Day, as It Ought to Be," this item:

A recent experiment in one of our public schools has been watched with great interest by many people. In this school the children have been taught

[1] Read before the Missouri Society of Teachers of English at Columbia, May 4, 1912.

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to read, write, and cipher before learning civics, botany, trigonometry, and lattice work. The originality of the experiment is beyond question, but whether it will be favorably received by the people as a whole remains in great doubt.

Stover at Yale offers the scene in which the breezy young Westerner berates his classmates because they have read and thought to so little benefit and advantage. Of course much of this would not concern the English course at all were it not that this department is not only responsible for training in reading, composition, and literary history, but must also serve as a clearing-house for papers on every topic under the sun, and a few beyond. Many history departments teach the facts and let the critical discussions and inferences come out in papers prepared as English compositions; current topics are as frequently discussed in English as in economics and sociology, and every teacher of English is expected—and willing—to read about marconigrams and the evolution of ions. In reality every teacher of English is forced to develop into a modern Herr Diogenes Teufelsdröckh, and, if the truth were revealed in faculty rosters, would deserve to have printed opposite his name, *Professor der Allerlei Wissenschaft.* The restricted and competitive world of business exacts from its leaders and employees efficient speaking and writing, and these demands force every pupil who knows that he is going to enter this field to be extremely careful about his acquisition, retention, and use of words and expressions.

In the main, teachers of English gladly welcome these advanced standards. Mere pride in themselves, if not confidence in their ability, would induce them to want to secure better results this year than last, to hope that within their own lifetime fourth-year high-school English will be the equivalent of present-day college Freshman English. In education, as in life itself; in study, as in business; it is the goal that determines the course. Let entrance to college demand a higher intellectual level than it demands today; let it require a fuller knowledge of the most powerful energizing force we possess, our English language, and note how quickly the advanced standard will be attained by youths who now complain of weekly themes and supplementary reading. Certainly this contention is sustained by several definite instances. Universities

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which allow exemptions from examinations in all other subjects never exempt in English courses. Dartmouth, having warned the student body that a fixed standard in scholarship must be reached, this mid-year dismissed sixty Freshmen and Sophomores, and even dropped five Juniors. The *Alumni Magazine* declares, "It is unlikely that such inclusively drastic action will again be necessary." This statement is true. When the medical schools of the universities advanced their entrance requirements the alumni who count noses and bodies as indications of greatness deplored the backward move of the administrations. Only for a short time did any school suffer in numbers, and now those same carpers are boasting of the stand for pure scholarship made by their independent institutions. Merely printing at the top of examinations this sentence, "No candidate will be accepted in English whose work is notably defective in point of spelling, punctuation, idiom, or division into paragraphs," marked a decided advance over the former idea that merely because a boy could answer questions of fact concerning books he had read, he was therefore capable of attempting work in college. In the reworded form of this warning I see, perhaps erroneously, another advance: "However accurate in subject-matter, no paper will be considered satisfactory if seriously defective in punctuation, spelling, or other essentials of good usage."

This brings us directly to college-entrance requirements. One cannot dismiss this phase by saying that no person is forced to enter college, and that if he does not like the terms offered him he may go elsewhere, because no institution of learning would take such an attitude. On the other hand the high school cannot blatantly declare that its graduates have done their best and that they must be admitted to college with no question by the authorities as to their fitness. Every college professor will frankly admit that students receive degrees without being fully equipped for research work, let us say; and every honest high-school principal will refuse at times to recommend a pupil for college entrance without examination. There must admittedly be some test. "But no partial, narrow, contracted, pinched, occasional system will be at all suitable to such an object."

In classic languages the high-school texts are decided by a con-

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ventional agreement of what the graduate shall have done before attempting Freshman Latin and Greek. In modern languages the choice is naturally wide. The English requirements stand between these two, and now afford excellent chances to test an applicant's knowledge and ability, offering a wide and varied choice among definite prescriptions. If an education implies acquaintance with good books—and this phase must be emphasized today when desultory reading and pseudo-literary badinage tempt the young impressionable mind to less worthy products—then some such list must always be held up as the framework of a liberal mind. If one study this enumeration, he will feel less inclined to speak of it as a list—forty items from which ten are to be offered for examination; after this year (1913–15) practically the same number, but the selection marked by a wider historic range, and a proportionate diversity of form and material.

Though the making of reading lists is a delightful pastime, and though the deplorable condition of a reader wrecked on an island with a case of books carefully selected by him for others has been pathetically depicted by a librarian in a recent volume, the fact remains that for adolescents choices must always be made. Last week a father told of a woman who had packed into her eighteen-year-old son's trunk before he went back to college a certain book, making the boy promise that he would induce all the young men of his acquaintance to read it. There was a storm of protests from all the parents. You will understand why when you know that the volume contained three plays by Brieux. A pupil may not find in *The Pilgrim's Progress* the same interest he finds in *The Jungle Book*. He should not. But for such a reason to discard Bunyan is as wrong as to allow a boy to pass over imaginary quantities in algebra merely because he intends to be a civil engineer and will deal only with applied mathematics; or to let a girl who intends to do magazine illustrating omit the wheel and pulley from school physics. We must not let the pupil run the danger of missing an acquaintance with *one* of the essentials of general culture. He may not be "taking" literature, but he must be exposed to it. "Perhaps *The House of Seven Gables* seems a little dry in the first few chapters," writes a boy after seven weeks in the high school,

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"but it grows more and more interesting as one reads it." We teachers know that that boy's mind was developing as he read this romance and that he was really unconsciously feeling the charm and power of Hawthorne. A girl added a different critical note: "From the start it is not interesting to read, but as you get farther along you find some interesting point which has its conclusion in the next chapter, and there you find a new point; until you get so interested that you think you are reading the best book you ever read."

Yet teachers have informed me that Hawthorne is too far above children of fourteen and fifteen. So is Goethe's *Faust* above most people who read it. But the attempts to master both are worth all the trouble and effort one must expend. We all deplore, with Professor Münsterberg, the showy, novel methods we have to resort to in order to attract involuntary attention in the classroom. We wonder whether our demands are not above the capacity. Sometimes we receive startling confirmation of our cherished opinions from least expected sources. A graduate recently came back from Princeton, and when I asked him what I could do for the boys going to college, he gave me the best advice I have received in years: "Soak it to 'em in English."

In advocating the raising of the standard of college English I do not ask that the amount required of the high-school pupil be increased. We know that both pupils and teachers have quite enough now; in fact so far as composition alone is concerned, teachers have too much work. I ask that the college insist on a greater facility in speaking and writing; a skill in discriminating between the good expression and the better one; a familiarity with the best usage—the familiarity which breeds, not contempt, but content; an intimate knowledge of books read; a critically comparative estimate of literary execution.

What results will follow from such a procedure as here requested? First of all, college graduates themselves will be better trained, and if they become high-school teachers will bring to their profession a knowledge, a skill, a prestige, and best of all, a love and regard for English that will be exacting, and an enthusiasm, contagious in spite of all precautions. We should hope that the

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faculties ten years hence will be better than the present ones, for we all want to believe that the faculties to which we now belong are better than they were a decade ago, even though we were members of them at that time. These better equipped teachers will be better able, gradually at first, then rapidly, but always effectively, to direct a pupil's energy toward his own self-cultivation in English. When the high schools meet the advanced requirements of the colleges, the lower grades will be forced to meet the high-school standards. This is inevitable and absolutely fitting. Every teacher who has come in contact with pupils fresh from the lower schools must feel that more consistent training can be done with children. For this, also, the teachers' training must be raised, and teachers' colleges must not propagate such errors—to cite a trifling illustration—as the use of a legitimate punctuation mark, the parenthesis, to indicate in manuscript the omission of a word or passage. The St. Louis Teachers' college has made an advance. It will no longer admit all graduates from its own high schools. This year the entrant must have stood during her Senior year in the upper two-thirds of her class; in 1913 she must have been for two years, and after that, for four years, within the upper two-thirds of her class. Otherwise she must take examinations.

Thus the breezes of discussion and interest are gently stirring and the little straws are moving restlessly this way and that; soon, I believe, they will all go whirling on in a single direction, and then we shall see that those straws indicate that the breezes have increased into a steady wind of change for a high degree of efficiency. For the teacher of English all this means alteration, activity, unceasing work, eternal vigilance that brings little liberty, but before him he can keep his eyes on a single phrase of a cultured English novelist who gave to the educator in fiction some of the noble rôles he plays in life itself, for George Meredith described the school teacher "as ploughing to make a richer world."

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CULTURE AND EFFICIENCY THROUGH COMPOSITION

GLENN E. PALMER
University of Kansas

Professor Lounsbury's article in *Harper's Magazine* (November, 1911) and its subsequent discussion in *The Nation* have brought again to the foreground the subject of rhetoric instruction. With regard to it, teachers seem to have divided themselves into two opposing ranks, the one, which seems to be centered at Yale, holding that the business of the professor of composition is to produce writers, the other, which is well represented at Harvard, holding that the best we can do for the Freshman student is to cultivate in him good language habits. The one division throws the emphasis on the inspiration of literature, recognizing that there can be no literary production without culture. The other party lays the stress upon painstaking drill in the writing of short themes, assuming that the average Freshman comes to the university with little knowledge of grammar and less of the organization of the paragraph and the composition. The one would develop a few geniuses by the systemic treatment of enriching thoughts and broadening experiences. The other would train a class full of Philistines prepared for the everyday needs of democracy, by enforcing good language habits, and increasing expressiveness. It is the old distinction between culture and efficiency.

The question arises as to whether these two positions are so incompatible as they might at first seem. Might we not agree with each of these parties, but go a step farther than either; indeed, if such be possible, combine the purpose of both in pursuance of a still higher aim? Culture, indeed, is good until it reaches the point of dilettantism and becomes a self-centered striving for exquisite agonies of the soul. And efficiency is good unless carried to the extreme of impersonal system and administrative machinery that is rife in many of our state institutions today. But each is dependent upon the other. We are too prone to culture ourselves out of

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all usefulness, or to let our vague search for efficiency defeat its own purpose by abnormally developing the obvious exterior to the detriment of that which is within. After all, is not the purpose of education to enable us to live, and are we not safe in concluding that in the last analysis the most efficient life is that which is cultured, and the most cultured that which is at the same time efficient?

If this be so, the study of language composition, whether it begins with literature and works back to principles, or begins with principles and works up to literature, should furnish both viewpoint and methods of procedure; it should develop in students a healthy spirit of investigation by opening to them one of the many gates to the "world of thought and law, of marvels and of mysteries, of moral beauty and ideal truth, beginning haply where they had hoped all need for effort ended"; and it should at the same time regulate the field of their investigations by the needs of the democracy in which they live. The pure efficiency method falls short in so far as it causes students to look upon the study of composition as a "stupid grind," and introduces into our faculties an abnormal race of men colloquially known at Harvard as "rhetoric slaves." The pure cultural method is weak in so far as it ignores the practical needs of life by confining the material of its culture to a vague literary interpretation, or leaves its natural field to teach the student the art of seeing and the philosophy of thinking independent of their bearing upon language composition. True, the Freshman must be taught his syntax; but this alone is apt to be dull and uninteresting, and "To grow by any study, we must admire, be touched, perceive the latent charm, not merely be able to dissect and reconstruct the outer framework."[1] True also, he must be trained to think and appreciate, but why isolate this culture from life, or from the study of the language composition as an expression of life?

That there is an increasing tendency at present to view language not as an independent organism, but as immediately connected with life, and hence to view language composition no longer as a system

[1] James Rhoades, *The Training of the Imagination* (John Lane Co., New York, 1908), p. 35.

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of rules but as a subject for investigation was illustrated at the last meeting of The Modern Language Association (Chicago, December 26–29, 1911) in a paper read by Dr. David Blondheim, in which he declares that language study should be carried on in connection with psychology, philosophy, history, and kindred sciences. This tendency is but another expression of the general scientific movement that is alive today, for as President Hutchins of Michigan has said, "Science has surely come to its own not only in the realm of speculation and theory, but in the practical affairs of life as well."[1] More and more rhetoric instruction is losing its nature as a drill in the tabulated language superstitions of the old generation, and turning its endeavor to a sane investigation of the facts of language expression and composition. The old textbooks of formal rhetoric are being supplanted by scholarly works of historical research, revealing absurdities in our grammatic dogmas, by philosophical essays dealing in a popular way with the fundamental principles of literature, and by careful psychological studies into the act of composition as practiced by great writers. The proverbial rhetoric instructor is breaking away from the staid ways of the dogmatic pedagogue and is beginning to thaw a little, to throw life into a subject that was once considered dull but necessary, by imbuing his students with the contagion of scientific investigation. Principles of literature, once thought so ethereal and significant, are now being brought into vital connection with practical life by the formation of schools of journalism and departments for the developing of playwrights. Everywhere fatherly advice and dogmatic statement of rule are beginning to make way for a scholarly investigation which shall be sane and practical.

Interesting as is this present-day movement as manifested in the application of scientific methods to the various phases of language composition, the fact, of course, remains that writing is an art and not a science. To be sure, it furnishes ample ground for research productive of results at once instructive and inspiring, but an art it remains nevertheless. It is quite possible that our

[1] H. B. Hutchins, "Progressiveness in Higher Education," *New York Times*, October 14, 1911.

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newborn enthusiasm may obscure this fact, and that we may for a while be tempted to lay too much stress on our psychology and philology, but this is perhaps but one of the natural excesses of a flood-tide and therefore to be expected. The principal importance to be attached to the invasion of scientific methods in the field of art, wherever it occurs, is to be found in the corrective and disturbing influences which it brings with it. Crystallization in any art is detrimental, as is illustrated by the degeneracy that occurs in groups of painters after their conscious organization into schools. When workable principles become traditions, and traditions become superstitions, science steps in and tells us that our precious hobbies are not laws at all but only rubbish, reminding us rather forcibly at times that we must "move along" lest we block the way of progress.

We naturally ask, then, what are some of the corrective influences which the present scientific movement is applying to the study and instruction of language composition. Perhaps these can be summed up specifically in the observation that the composition instructor is at present striving for too immediate results. He may go into raptures over the delicacies of Shakespeares before rows of students staring at him with dumb faces, and he may hear them repeat after him his own formulas of admiration; but learning to write or to appreciate is the work of years, not of semesters. He may, by a process of hot-house breeding, teach his Freshmen to talk in sentences or to write whole paragraphs without a grammatical blunder, but he should not be surprised at having the exquisite pleasure of hearing the same students, as Seniors, say "I done it," or "I seen it." Freshman composition is but a step in the student's development. Why then should the rhetoric instructor take upon his shoulders so huge a responsibility as to hold himself sponsor for all that the student writes or says? Why then this mad rush to cram the student's brain with rules and principles that he has not time in the natural process of growth to assimilate? Why this stringent requirement to have him mechanically construct (or have his roommate construct for him) more themes than he can interestedly compose and carefully revise, or than his instructor can personally appreciate and constructively criticize? If he is

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to become a great writer or even a careful speaker, he must be made so by the concentration of all of the forces of the university upon his development.

And if this be so, what bearing does it have upon our two methods of culture and efficiency? Merely this, that if the efficiency method is to be efficient, it must take time to cultivate, and if the cultural method is to furnish real culture, it must resuscitate itself and, like Rip Van Winkle, come down from its mountain to join its life with the life of the time. We may be going forward, we know we are moving, and rhetoric instruction, if it is not to block the general progress, must get in step with the procession.

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EXPERIENCE DAY

FREDERICK WM. EDGERTON
Bulkeley School, New London, Conn.

Like the poor of the biblical proverb are the errors of the secondary-school students of composition and rhetoric. And a teacher who painstakingly corrects the written outlines and themes of his pupils will more than once wonder if his criticisms are not serving to perpetuate rather than to exterminate the many erroneous methods of expressing thoughts. Gone from today's exercise are the errors of yesterday, but, heedless of red ink, they live on in the speech of the pupils. A boy who would not write "I seen him" will glibly ask, "Can I bring this book to John?" Grateful as the teacher is for even a small return, he cannot avoid the responsibility for his pupils' verbal errors. Nor can he avoid the thought that the correction of those errors will have a much greater and more permanent effect than his laborious criticisms of the written work. If this be not so, then, like the returned Peter, we apologize for our belief. But it is more than a theory. Let us explain.

In our endeavor to interest in composition work the boys of Bulkeley School—a boys' high school, getting its pupils from New London and vicinity—we have resorted to the establishing of "Experience Day," for those in the second- and third-year classes.

"Experience Day" is a day on which the regular recitation in English is devoted to the oral telling of personal experiences by each member of the class. A pupil duly elected by ballot presides as chairman. It is his duty to arrange the day's program and conduct the meeting. Previous to the day of the meeting he secures from his classmates the titles of the "experiences" they intend to relate. He may assign places in the program as he desires, but the usual procedure is to assign by lot, thus avoiding any favoritism. When he has arranged the order of speakers, he selects critics—a different one for each speaker. His program

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takes the mechanical form of E-1, E-2, C-1, E-3, C-2, E-4, C-3 (experience one, experience two, criticism on first experience, experience three, criticism on experience two, experience four, criticism on experience three), etc. Thus each member (including the chairman) relates an "experience," criticizes a classmate's "experience," and has his own "experience" criticized.

On this day the teacher vacates his seat in favor of the student-chairman, who conducts the meeting in the formal manner of a presiding officer. He announces the speaker, the subject, and the critic. Each pupil when called on for his "experience" advances to the platform, recognizes the chairman by "Mr. President," and the class by "Fellow-Classmates," and then proceeds, without notes, to relate his "experience."

When the chairman announces the speaker and his subject, he also designates the critic. The latter gives his criticism in turn when the chairman calls for it. Instead of going to the platform he rises at his place, addresses the chairman as "Mr President," and then gives his praise or censure or both. His criticism must not only point out faults, but also correct them; his praise must be tempered with reason. It is a rule of the class that the critic must commend before he may point out the faults. Furthermore, he is subject to criticism by any member of the class, especially by the one whom he is criticizing. The following suggestions, written each time on the blackboard before the beginning of the hour, explain themselves:

1. Commend first. (Take notes.) [These are the only notes used.]
2. Avoid "and," "but," "so," etc.
3. Watch modifiers.
4. Pronounce final "g's," "t's," "d's," etc.
5. Form clear-cut sentences.

The length of time allotted to each pupil is ordinarily four minutes. To indicate the time, the classes have agreed that the chairman shall rap once with his gavel at the end of three minutes and twice at the end of four. If his subject requires fuller treatment, the speaker may continue if the class so wills. This year the third-year class decided to indicate approval by the uplifted hand; disapproval, by the arm raised, hand down. So far there have been no "hands down."

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In the choosing of subjects the boys are given absolute freedom. They are not required to submit their choice for the teacher's approval. Indeed, the teacher does not know what a boy is to speak about until the chairman announces the subject. The following will give an idea of the kind of subjects chosen:

I. "How I Saw a Comet."
II. "An Adventure with a Tramp."
III. "My First Experience as a Chauffeur."
IV. "Polishing a Piano."
V. "Something to Remember."
VI. "Troubles in Camp."
VII. "Running a Locomotive."
VIII. "Two Points of View."
IX. "Up the Connecticut."
X. "Rocked in the Cradle of Long Island Sound."
XI. "An Experience in a Single Shell."
XII. "When I Was Leader."

Sometimes a boy will tell an "experience" in chapters—one each "Day." This method was followed by a Russian Jew who told of his trials and tribulations on the journey from Russia to America. Another boy prefaced his story by saying that a newspaper cartoon had recalled to his mind a youthful adventure of which he would tell. So saying, he handed the cartoon to a boy in the front row, requesting him to pass it around. Three boys divided a shared experience into three chapters—told successively on the same day. Hard pressed for a personal experience, another fell back upon his knowledge of the steam-engine. A simple diagram drawn on the blackboard before class aided him in explaining in four minutes the important features of the engine.

Some time ago a boy brought delight to his hearers when he told the class of his management of a miniature railroad which he had constructed in his yard. Listen to a fragment of his story—his description of the locomotive:

> It consisted severally of a box, a barrel, a stove-pipe, a milk can, a dinner bell, and a few miscellaneous pieces. It appeared to be a cross between a steam roller, a sewing machine, and a saw mill. But if it is true that it is the clothes which make the man, I can assert that it is the paint that makes the locomotive, for when our locomotive—mounted on wheels, and with a cylinder and driving rod—had been given a coat of glistening black paint with red trimmings, it did look rather real.

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There is little more to be said about the criticisms. That they react upon their givers is one important purpose they serve. Best of all, they show a greater return, both in the oral and in the written work, than do the teacher's many red-ink markings. And what a deal of labor they save! To be sure, they are more often destructive than constructive, but they are always fair and just. The following is a typical criticism: "I think Mr. Blank's 'experience' was well told. His expression, 'released,' was a good one to use to describe the dismissal of a class. He said 'goin' ' instead of 'going' and did not avoid 'so' as much as he could. On the whole his 'experience' was a bit verbose."

Although the teacher makes occasional critical remarks, he praises rather than censures. But he does seize the opportunity to enforce a precept or recommend a course of action. When a boy gives an account of an interesting canoe trip, the teacher finds therein an excellent opportunity to recommend the reading of Stevenson's *Inland Voyage* and Parkman's *Oregon Trail*, or some similar writing. To the newcomer struggling with the ways of the New World, he suggests Jacob Riis' *The Making of an American*.

On "Experience Day" the teacher plays the part of visitor in the classroom. He sits at the rear of the room and does not interfere with the proceedings save to make the suggestions just mentioned. But it is a day of revelation for him. He gets into a closer, more helpful touch with the individual needs of each boy than he could by endless days of routine composition work. And he teaches without teaching. The boys forget the instructor; they talk to their mates; they criticize their mates; they commend their mates.

These last thoughts lead to the real value of the day—the value to the pupil. The work teaches the boys to talk; yes, it teaches them to think and talk at the same time. It arouses a desire to criticize their own utterances; it gives them a self-reliance, a self-confidence, and a mental grip. And the criticism of their peers and by their peers availeth more for good than red ink or grades. Indeed, the boys of Bulkeley School would willingly have every day an "Experience Day."

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ORAL COMPOSITION IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOL AS A BASIS FOR EFFECTIVE TRAINING IN WRITTEN COMPOSITION

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Language is essentially a social art. It is first acquired through imitation and as a result of the impulse or desire to communicate thought or feeling to others in order to stimulate in them action or response of some kind. Upon this social character of the art of speech, then, must we build the more highly perfected art, both in speech and in writing, in accordance with the recognized conventions of these forms of communication.

The instinctive power of vocalization in the infant is but an involuntary reflex; but the power to use words is controlled by the centers of consciousness, and is, therefore, a part of the user's mental training. As William James puts it,[1] "The entire brain, more or less, is at work in a man who uses language." Thus mental growth and language power develop together as inseparable parts, each of the other. This gives us a second important principle as a guide to our language teaching: In order to induce speech, or a ready flow of written language, there must first be engendered thought.

Practically all modern psychologists seem to agree in this conception of the close relationship existing between language and mental action. As Royce would say,[2] "It is the purpose of communication that alone makes language essentially significant as a part of our mental equipment." The inference here is that the real motive for the acquiring and perfecting of the art of speech or of writing is to be found in the desire to communicate something out of one's own experiences as they shape themselves in one's mental reactions. Others go a step farther and assert that language is not only the instrument of communication but that it is thought

[1] *Principles of Psychology*, I, 56.

[2] *Outlines of Psychology*, p. 282.

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itself, or at least essential to thought.[1] Even more radical is the point of view expressed by Höffding when he says:[2] "With some people thought is an inner speech to the extent that intense thought makes them hoarse. . . . . There seems to be with everybody an innervation, more or less strong, of the articulatory muscles in every representation of a word." The same writer calls attention to the fact that while persons who thus respond to the thought process are those "whose ideas of words consist mainly of motor-representations," with others ideas of words may be auditory or visual, or "reproductions of words as seen or heard."

Sufficient has been said to give emphasis to the third principle to be insisted upon in all language training: the acquisition of skill and accuracy in the use of language calls for continued and oft repeated effort in the expression of one's own thoughts and feelings as a result of experiences. In the natural order speech comes first. The transfer from speech to writing is a difficult process. The complexity of this process is readily suggested by what we have just quoted from Höffding in regard to the various ways in which individuals respond to thought processes. A little consideration will show us that no two individuals would take exactly the same mental route in getting to the symbol to be used in the expression of an idea. Hence the futility of laying down set rules.

We must first secure readiness, then accuracy, then sustained effort. Readiness will mean a full vocabulary, with each word significant of actual mental experience, possessed of a personal content in the mind of the user. Accuracy will come because of this "personal content," and will increase as this content increases, together with a resultant discriminative use of words. Sustained effort in expression is, perhaps, the difficult thing to attain. It means the gradual cultivation of the power of sustained effort in thinking. The habit of the daily recitation in any of the school subjects will largely determine this as far as the high-school student is concerned.

[1] Cf. Dewey in *How We Think*, p. 170: "Three typical views have been maintained regarding the relation of thought and language: first, that they are identical; second, that words are the garb or clothing of thought, necessary not for thought but only for conveying it; and third (the view we shall here maintain) that while language is not thought, it is necessary for thinking as well as for its communication."

[2] *Outlines of Psychology* (Lowndes' tr.), p. 72.

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It is to be feared that just here is one of the great obstacles to progress in language skill in our schools. The average recitation is not very well calculated to develop any such habit of sustained effort, unless in the case of the teacher. We become too readily impatient at the stumbling efforts of pupils, and seek to help them by too frequent questioning, if, indeed, we do not ourselves take up the line of thought and carry it to the conclusion for them. It is to this general recitation work that we must look for any effective reform movement in composition. The English recitation alone can never even neutralize the bad habits of speech which are too often permitted to form in other classrooms, to say nothing of our efforts to transcend present acquirements and attain a more highly perfected language art.

Principal H. V. Church of the J. Sterling Morton Township High School, Cicero, Illinois, has made a very successful effort to secure co-operation among all his teachers in the inculcation of habits of correct usage in speaking and writing. A fine spirit of mutual helpfulness in the way of criticism of errors in speech has been developed among the students. At the same time, all written work is marked as English composition, but with a marking entirely distinct from that of each particular subject. With such a scheme as this and with careful attention to the acquisition by the pupils of the power of sustained effort in oral composition, it is believed that much better results would come from our English work.

The natural order of procedure is undoubtedly from speech to writing. Perfected forms of speech, however, are as readily transferable as are habitual crudities. On the other hand, the transfer of habitual crudities to the written form tends directly to deepen the impression and thus fix more indelibly the undesirable habits of speech. This gives an added reason for putting the initial emphasis upon the pupil's habits of oral expression. An incident is remembered as observed in connection with a visit to the Polo, Illinois, High School a few years ago. The class under observation was first-year high-school, and the chief purpose of the observer was to ascertain the preparedness of the pupils for regular instruction in English of high-school grade. The subject of the recitation was physical geography. To the great gratification of the visitor, the pupils, reciting by topics, invariably displayed unusual ability

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for sustained effort in thinking, while the form of expression was practically faultless in every case. Nor was there the evidence that the work had been memorized. True, this may have been an unusual class for the school, but there was no doubt as to the ability of those pupils to qualify for the high-school work in English.

Reference has been made to the social qualities of speech. Undoubtedly the chief stimulus is to be found in one's social environment. How often we see the need of a fuller reaction from this social stimulus in the form of good conversation. In a little book on the *Art of Conversation*, written by J. P. Mahaffey a quarter of a century ago, the author makes a plea for training in this art, on the ground of its universality and general necessity. And why not? A proper attention to the cultivation of oral speech at the age when the social instincts are developing rapidly would certainly aid toward such a result. It might be the means of making fairly common a delightful art which now often seems about to be numbered with the lost.

Given a well-developed habit of ready and correct oral composition, we must not lose sight of the fact that there are difficulties in the way of making the transfer of thought from sound to symbol. It may be necessary to emphasize, in this connection, the importance of providing for continuous practice in such transfer, following closely the progress made in acquiring good speech habits. Such practice should begin very early in elementary training and continue up into the secondary grades. Here, after all, is to be found the most trying point in the teaching of written composition. No amount of oral training can eliminate the psychological obstruction involved; but training in speech will give an impetus which will aid mightily in getting over this difficult stage in the process.

"The problem of the school in respect to speech," says Dewey,[1] "is to direct pupils' oral and written speech, used primarily for practical and social ends, so that gradually it shall become a conscious tool of conveying knowledge and assisting thought." It would seem that even in this final attainment, more than anywhere else, is needed the compelling force of oral fluency to tide the learner over to the ready use of language as such "a conscious tool" in

[1] *How We Think*, p. 179.

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writing. Certain it is that by bringing to the points of attack all the accumulated forces of social response and of training to habits of sustained thinking, the chances for a successful issue of our efforts in this very difficult field of instruction will be greatly augmented, if not insured.

Perhaps no better illustration could be given here of the possibilities of such a treatment of composition as has been hinted at in the above lines than that of a piece of work observed about two years ago, at the time of a visit to Tuskegee Institute. The exercise was one in rhetoricals by a class in the evening school. Several students gave exercises during the visit to this class. As is doubtless known to most teachers, the academic work of this institution is made to connect as directly as possible with industrial work, in some form of which all students are engaged. The first exercise was a demonstration in harness-making by a student from that industrial department. The work was entirely oral. The student first gave a brief but interesting history of the evolution of the harness as an auxiliary to transportation by horse-power. Next followed a description of a "side" of leather as related to the materials needed in harness construction; then the method of marking out and cutting, the putting together of the different parts, and the use which each served as a part of the finished product. Throughout the entire presentation the young man seemed sure of himself, as on familiar ground, and the language used was unusually good for the grade of work represented. Similar exercises followed, one on electric lighting, another on plumage of birds as decorative materials by a girl from the millinery department. All were admirably done.

An examination of the written composition work of the school showed that it also was closely related to the daily, concrete tasks of shop, field, or home. Here, then, we see excellent results in a most unexpected situation growing out of a constant use of oral work based on concrete experiences in tasks of everyday human interest. The demonstrations there heard were fine examples of cultivation, through both oral and written composition, of a full vocabulary, of accuracy in its use, and of the power of sustained effort in both thought and language.

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EDITORIAL

THE COUNCIL MEETING

As already announced, the National Council of Teachers of English will convene in annual session in Chicago, November 29–30. Two matters for regret present themselves at once: Thanksgiving turkey must, in many cases, be eaten enroute and, though Chicago is perhaps as central as possible, many members from the seaboards will doubtless feel that the effort of attendance is too great. The Council will have to face the question of how proportionate representation can be maintained. Fortunately this is amply provided for so far as the governing body, the Board of Directors, is concerned.

The program will warrant, however, more than ordinary effort to be present. No fewer than eight committees will report either progress or final results, and their problems are, without exception, of far-reaching importance. Consider, for example, the work of the Committee on Grammatical Nomenclature. This subject is now being discussed throughout the British Empire, in various countries on the Continent, and in several American states. Moreover, a joint committee, made up largely of philologists and teachers of foreign languages in the United States, has had the matter under advisement for some time and may be expected to promulgate a policy in the near future. If practical teachers of English in the schools wish to have a voice in determining the nomenclature of the textbooks in grammar, they will find their opportunity in the Council. Equal importance is to be attached to the other reports. Perhaps that on the labor and cost of composition teaching may be singled out for special mention. Professor Hopkins and his associates, by most faithful effort, have gathered a body of facts whose significance cannot possibly be missed. The status of English must and will be changed. Either the conditions necessary to satisfactory results will be provided or its position as the central subject in the curriculum will have to be surrendered. The

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Council has the opportunity to suggest the remedy and to bring tremendous pressure to bear in getting the remedy applied. The members should come prepared for decisive action.

A new feature, the section meetings, will appeal to all. Here will be opportunity to draw nearer to those engaged in like service. It is especially gratifying to know that public speaking is not to wander alone but will join helpfully the other activities intended to insure a mastery of the mother-tongue. Here, as always, in union there is strength. Moreover, the plaint heard last year that no provision had been made for the special interests of teachers in the elementary schools will not arise. Professor Baker's acceptance of the chairmanship of the section is ample assurance that important topics in that field will be ably handled.

The success of the November meeting, as well as the future of the Council, is, of course, in the hands of the members. Every individual who can by any means attend will surely do so. Every local association should send its quota of delegates, from whom the Directors are mainly chosen. All members should feel it both a duty and a pleasure to acquaint their colleagues with the plans for the meeting and to urge them to join us without delay. A good thing is well started and needs only the combined enthusiasm and loyalty of those already interested to become one of the most powerful and helpful of the educational agencies of our time.

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THE ROUND TABLE

A NEW SOURCE OF COMIC EFFECT

The pleasant little comedy called "Grammatical Nomenclature," now being staged by various bodies of the profession, has progressed through a scene or two, and is going along merrily. The lack of harmony between the scenes is one of the sources of comedy effect. On second thought, it is the only one. And, indeed, those interested may be thankful even for that—in a subject generally supposed to be barren of dramatic possibilities. Reform in grammatical nomenclature is one thing in New York, and quite a different thing "Out of the Hurly-Burly" —that is, in New Jersey. In New York there are to be, hereafter, possessive and objective cases; in New Jersey, genitives and accusatives. In New York, children are to thrive on subjective complements; in New Jersey, on predicate adjectives. In New York, objective complements are to be a part of the daily school diet; in New Jersey, the factitive noun is to be regarded as the only Simon-pure food. And so on through an interesting list. Hereafter, little Stuyvesant Knickerbocker is to experience no bewilderment in his small noddle when the New York board of education adopts a new grammar; but woe unto him when he crosses into Jersey! It is the state line, not the coming of a new text-book or a new teacher, that in the future will determine whether there shall or shall not be a potential mood (or mode).

Perhaps a little sympathetic scoffing will help the cause along.

C. L. H.

To the Editor of the "English Journal":

We must always beware of generalities no matter how brightly they glitter—we English teachers, who are especially tempted to them.

Accordingly, as precise statement may be held the first requisite of intelligent discussion, I send the detailed scheme of the English course at St. Paul's School[1] as followed for several years past.

Very truly yours,

J. B. WHITE

CONCORD, N.H.

[1] Because of the current interest in the reorganization of secondary English it seems desirable to publish an example of the more conservative type of organization as a basis of comparison.—EDITOR.

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SCHEDULE OF ENGLISH

St. Paul's School

	To November 1	December 20	February 20	April 1	June 20
FIRST FORM (Four recitations a week)					
Language:					
Longmans' *English Grammar*	Pp. 1–62	Pp. 63–95	Pp. 95–117	Pp. 117–48	Pp. 149–216
Reed's *Word Lessons*	§§ 1–20	§§ 21–43	§§ 107–14 §§ 120–27	§§ 141–58	§§ 44–58 §§ 62–71
Literature:					
The Children's Garland	One poem memorized, ten read	As before	As before	As before	Two poems memorized, ten read
Swinton's *Fifth Reader*	12 selections read	As before	As before	As before	.....
Hawthorne's *Wonder Book*	.....	.....	.....	.....	May–June
Composition:					
A weekly theme of at least 300 words, subjects from the experience of the writer	On personal experiences	As before	As before	As before	As before
SECOND FORM (Four recitations a week)					
Language:					
Longmans' *English Grammar*	Pp. 62–117	Pp. 117–44	Pp. 145–64	Pp. 164–216	Pp. 217–59
Reed's *Word Lessons*	§§ 107–14 §§ 120–27	§§ 141–58	§§ 18–14	§§ 77–80 §§ 85–90 §§ 159–66	§§ 195–218
Webster's *Academic Dictionary:* derivation and meaning of selected words	.....	25 words	13 words	12 words	.....
Literature:					
The Children's Garland	One poem memorized, 12 read	As before	As before	As before	Two poems memorized, 12 read
Swinton's *Sixth Reader*	12 selections read	As before	As before	.....	.....

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SCHEDULE OF ENGLISH—*Continued*

	To November 1	December 20	February 20	April 1	June 20
Longfellow's *Tales of a Wayside Inn*, twelve selections	.....	.....	.....	March	.....
Dickens' *Tale of Two Cities*	.....	.....	.....	.....	May–June
Composition:					
A weekly theme of at least 300 words, subjects from the experience of the writer	On personal experiences	As before	As before	As before	In form of dialogue
THIRD FORM					
(Three recitations a week)					
Language:					
Longmans' *English Grammar*	Pp. 217–59; 285–96	Pp. 260–65; 271–76 296–303; 304–18 (omit §§ 600–606)			
Daly's *Advanced Rational Speller*	Pp. 1–20	Pp. 21–41	Pp. 42–57	Pp. 58–70	Pp. 71–96
Webster's *Academic Dictionary:* derivation and meaning of selected words	25 words	15 words	.....	.....	.....
Herrick and Damon's *Composition and Rhetoric*	.....	.....	.....	Pp. 14–95	Pp. 96–142
Literature:					
Palgrave's *Golden Treasury* (First Series)	One poem memorized, 12 read	As before	As before	As before	Two poems memorized
Irving: *Sketch Book*	.....	.....	January–February	.....	.....
Franklin: *Autobiography*	.....	.....	.....	February–March	.....
Byron: *Prisoner of Chillon*	.....	.....	.....	.....	April
Mazeppa	.....	.....	.....	.....	April
Stevenson: *Treasure Island*	.....	.....	.....	.....	May
Macaulay: *Lays of Ancient Rome*	.....	.....	.....	.....	June
Composition:					
A weekly theme of at least 400 words	On personal experiences	In form of dialogue	On topics from books	As before	As before

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FOURTH FORM (Three recitations a week)					
Language:					
Herrick and Damon's *Composition and Rhetoric*	Pp. 143–221	Pp. 222–60	Pp. 261–99	Pp. 299–318	Review
Literature:					
Shakespeare: *As You Like It*	October and	November	.....	.....	.....
Swift: *Gulliver's Voyage to Lilliput*	.....	.....	January	.....	.....
Defoe: *Robinson Crusoe*	.....	.....	January–February	.....	.....
Scott: *Quentin Durward*	.....	.....	.....	February–March	.....
Hawthorne: *House of the Seven Gables*	.....	.....	.....	.....	April–May
Literary History:					
Backus and Brown's *Great English Writers*	Chap. iii	Chaps. iv, vi	Chaps. ix, x, xi	Chaps. xii, xiii, xv, xviii	Chaps. xvii, xxii
With the selections for reading	.....	Pp. 255–67	Pp. 283–95	Pp. 309–21; 327–35	Pp. 339–47
Composition:					
A weekly theme of at least 400 words	On personal experiences	In form of dialogue	On topics from books	As before	As before
FIFTH FORM (Three recitations a week)					
Literature:					
Shakespeare: *Merchant of Venice*	October				
Julius Caesar	October and	November			
Addison and Steele: *DeCoverley Papers*	.....	December			
Goldsmith: *Deserted Village*	.....	.....	January		
Gray: *Elegy in a Country Churchyard*†	.....	.....	January		
Coleridge: *Ancient Mariner**	.....	.....	January		

* After 1912, to be discontinued.

† After 1912, to be introduced.

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SCHEDULE OF ENGLISH—*Continued*

	To November 1	December 20	February 20	April 1	June 20
Scott: *Lady of the Lake*	.....	.....	January and	February	
Ivanhoe	.....	.....	February and	March	
Irving: *Sketch Book**	.....	.....	.....	.....	April
Macaulay: *Lord Clive*	.....	.....	.....	March	
Warren Hastings†	.....	.....	.....	.....	April
DeQuincey: *Joan of Arc**	.....	.....	.....	.....	April
*English Mail Coach**	.....	.....	.....	.....	May
Dickens: *David Copperfield*	.....	.....	.....	.....	April–May
George Eliot: *Silas Marner*	.....	.....	.....	.....	May–June
Parkman: *Oregon Trail* †	.....	.....	.....	.....	June
Composition:					
One or more themes weekly on topics from the reading					
SIXTH FORM					
(Three recitations a week)					
Shakespeare: *Macbeth*	October and	November			
Milton: *L'Allegro*	.....	November			
Il Penseroso	.....	December			
Comus	.....	.....	January–February		
Macaulay: *Life of Johnson*	.....	.....	.....	March	
Burke: *Speech on Conciliation with America*	.....	.....	.....	.....	April–May–June

* After 1912, to be discontinued. † After 1912, to be introduced.

NOTE.—In Longmans' *English Grammar*, pp. 1–62 deal with "parts of speech," pp. 63–216 with "parsing," pp. 217–76 with "analysis," pp. 285 and following with "history" and "derivation." The chapters in *Great English Writers* deal with the rise of drama, Shakespeare, Milton, Defoe, Swift, Addison, Pope, Johnson, Goldsmith, Burns, Scott, and novelists of the nineteenth century.

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THE AIMS OF HIGH-SCHOOL ENGLISH

I. In general the immediate aim of the work in English is to give students such knowledge and appreciation of books and how to use them, and such command of the art of expression in speech and in writing, as may reasonably be expected of young people at the end of a high-school course, and as will be of value to them in the future, in college or elsewhere.

II. Knowledge of books includes:

1. Ability to find pleasure in reading books by the better authors, both standard and contemporary; with an increasing knowledge of such books, and increasing ability to distinguish what is really good from what is trivial or weak.
2. Knowledge of a few of the greatest authors; their lives, their chief works, and the reasons for their importance in their own age and in ours.
3. Understanding of the leading features, in structure and style, of the main literary types, such as novels, dramas, essays, lyric poems.
4. Skill in the following three kinds of readings, and knowledge of when to use each:
   a) Cursory reading, to cover a great deal of ground rapidly, getting quickly at essentials.
   b) Careful reading, to master the book with exact understanding of its meaning and implications.
   c) Consultation, to trace quickly and accurately a particular fact, by means of indexes, guides, and reference books.

NOTE.—All book work should be done with a clear understanding, on the student's part, as to which of these three methods he is to use, and which of the purposes mentioned above is the immediate one.

III. Expression in speech includes:

1. Ability to answer clearly, briefly, and exactly a question on which one has the necessary information.
2. Ability to talk connectedly for from five to fifteen minutes to a class, club, or other group, on a subject of common interest which one has previously prepared, presenting it as an informal discussion or a formal report, as occasion demands.
3. Ability to join in an informal discussion, contributing one's share of information or opinion, without wandering from the point, and without discourtesy to others.

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4. (For those who have, or hope to develop, qualities of leadership) Ability, after suitable preparation and practice, to address an audience, or to conduct a public meeting, with proper dignity and formality, but without stiffness or embarrassment.
5. Ability to read aloud in such a way as to convey to the hearers the writer's thought and spirit, and to interest them in the matter presented.

NOTE.—All expression in speech demands distinct and correct, but not prim, pronunciation; an interested but not an affected manner; and a sincere purpose to stir up some interest, idea, or feeling in one's hearers.

IV. Expression in writing includes:

1. Correctness as to formal details; namely:
   a) A legible and firm handwriting.
   b) Correct spelling of common words (including the ordinary prefixes and suffixes) and knowledge of how to look up more difficult words.
   c) Correctness in grammar and idiom.
   d) Observance of the ordinary rules for capitals and marks of punctuation.
2. Ability to write a courteous letter, according to the forms in general use, and of the degree of formality or informality appropriate to the occasion.
3. Ability to write quickly and concisely the exact answers to questions on which one has the necessary information.
4. Ability to compose on the first draft a clear and readable paragraph, or series of paragraphs, on familiar subject-matter, with due observance of unity and order, and with some specific detail.
5. Ability to analyze and present in outline form the gist of a lecture or piece of literature, and to write an expansion of such an outline.
6. Ability, with due time for study and preparation, to plan and work out a clear, well-ordered, and interesting report of some length, on a subject from the field of one's special interests—literary, scientific, commercial, or what not.
7. Ability to write a short story, or other bit of imaginative writing, with some vigor and personality of style and in proper form to be submitted to the school paper.

NOTE.—All written expression should be based on a conscious effort to gain an enlarged vocabulary, a concise and vigorous style, and firmness and flexibility in constructing sentences and paragraphs.

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V. The kinds of skill enumerated above are taught for two fundamental reasons:

1. Cultural: To open to the student new and higher forms of pleasure.
2. Social (ethical): To make him more efficient and more actively interested in his relations with and service to others, as brought about through writing or speaking.

NOTE.—These two fundamental aims should be implicit, in the teacher's attitude and in the spirit of the class work, but should not be explicitly set forth, as should the immediate aim of each class exercise.

ALLAN ABBOTT

HORACE MANN HIGH SCHOOL
NEW YORK

LATIN AS A BRANCH OF ENGLISH STUDY

Every year complaints become louder that the investment in English teaching yields but a fraction of the desired results. Surely radical reforms are necessary, if English is to retain a respected position in the curricula of secondary schools and colleges, its total abolishment having already been urged by no less important an educator than Woodrow Wilson, formerly president of Princeton University.

It appears that pupils do not learn to speak grammatically through the study of English grammar, nor learn to write through the study of rhetoric; neither do they gain literary appreciation by an analytical study of English literature, nor become proficient in spelling through the use of spelling-books; nor do they, by a direct study of the English language, acquire etymology, a knowledge of which is such a decided help to good diction.

To make the teaching of English more definite and to give it much-needed backbone, why should not Latin, from which has been derived, indirectly, about 40 per cent of our words, be made a part of the English course? As a knowledge of Anglo-Saxon, which furnished us our simpler words, has always been considered essential to a thorough understanding of the mother-tongue, it would seem that Latin, from which have been derived most of the words least comprehensible to young people, should be regarded as still more essential to a proper mastery of English.

While the writer is in no sense a classicist, being opposed to the old-fashioned custom of teaching Latin and Greek as required subjects, Latin instruction engaged in by English teachers, *purely from an English*

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viewpoint, could not justly be regarded as anything else than a branch of English study.

Other reasons why Latin should become a part of the English course are:

First: Everyone who has studied Latin grammar admits it to be the best medium to an understanding of English grammar, which is so unscientific that the formal teaching of this subject has been barren of satisfactory results.

Second: The study of Latin is a help to the proper spelling of words.

Third: As the writing of correct sentences may be made the basis of composition work, the translation of Latin sentences into good English is an exercise unsurpassed as a literary drill for high-school students.

Fourth: Latin instruction in connection with English affords all pupils opportunity to learn whether or not the classics are likely to be distasteful to them, at the same time equipping those who wish to enter college.

Fifth: If Latin were taught by English instructors two days a week for a period of two years, all pupils would be enabled thus to complete first-year Latin, without expense to taxpayers other than the usual appropriation to the English department. This plan would also be a fortunate one for those who are unable to decide whether or not they will enter college until after the first or second year of their high-school course.

To summarize: Latin should be taught as a branch of high-school English, because it is an important aid to a knowledge of English grammar, composition, etymology, spelling, and diction, at the same time affording all students some conception of another language besides their own, without extra expense to the community.

Such a plan the author hopes to try out during the coming school year, and to submit the results for publication in the *English Journal*.

J. Willis Jefferis

Los Angeles Public Schools

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NEWS AND NOTES

THE MAY MEETING OF THE ENGLISH SECTION OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE UPPER OHIO VALLEY

The spring meeting of the English Section of the Association of Secondary Schools of the Upper Ohio Valley, which was held at the Fort Pitt Hotel, Pittsburgh, on May 18, was largely attended and brought forth some valuable papers. Professor George H. Putnam of the Pennsylvania College for Women, who spoke upon the topic "Highways and Byways," developed the thought that the overworked English teacher, though often unable to find time for the alluring bypaths of reading, can still gain the greatest inspiration from the books that he is interpreting to his classes, the broad highways of literature. After Professor Putnam's inspiring talk, the general subject, "How I Teach English Classics," was treated in five short papers, each dealing with a single classic. Miss Ada Palm of Peabody High School, Pittsburgh, in explaining her original methods of presenting Irving's *Sketch Book* to first-year classes, stressed oral reading by the pupils in the preparation of their lessons. "If they can't find any other listener on whom to inflict themselves," she said, "I tell them to read to the ever-patient and long-suffering bedpost." *Silas Marner* was discussed by Mr. L. B. Brink of the McKeesport High School, and *The Sir Roger de Coverley Papers* by Miss Gertrude Wray of the Johnstown High School. To many of those present Miss Wray's device, of asking pupils to write original papers describing Sir Roger's experiences at a moving-picture show and other twentieth-century resorts, came as a novel suggestion. Mr. F. L. Homer of the Central High School, Pittsburgh, who treated *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, emphasized the use of outlines in the study of these poems, and illustrated his paper by reading outlines used in his classes. One of the unique schemes mentioned by Mr. C. B. Story of the Wilkinsburgh High School as successful in arousing interest in *Macbeth* was the assignment of certain pupils as reporters on the *Scotland Daily Gazette* to the task of reporting each day the events connected with the murder of Duncan as they appeared in the lesson for that day.

At the business meeting a committee was appointed to investigate and report upon the errors in English most prevalent in the territory

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of the association. After the meeting most of those present took lunch together and enjoyed the opportunity for informal discussion. Later in the afternoon many of the members of the section availed themselves of the kind invitation of Professor Putnam to attend the May Day Fête of the Pennsylvania College for Women, a delightful open-air festival.

ERNEST C. NOYES

PITTSBURGH, PA.

ON TO CHICAGO

November 28 to 30 has been set as the time for the second annual meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English. The place is Chicago. Both time and place are the same as last year.

Meetings of the Board of Directors and of the Executive Committee will be held on November 28, the former in the evening, the latter at three in the afternoon. The general sessions will open Friday morning and continue until Saturday noon. Friday afternoon will be given up mainly to section meetings, which will be held from two to four. On Friday evening the members will sit down to the annual dinner. The business meeting for the election of directors is set for Friday afternoon at 4:15.

The meeting of the Council will this year be devoted chiefly to the consideration of the reports of special committees, of which there are at present eight. The topics upon which they are working are as follows: Grammatical Terminology, Home Reading of High-School Pupils, Types of Organization of High-School English Courses, Testimony of High-School Graduates as to the Efficiency of Their English Instruction, Articulation of the English Work of the Elementary Schools with That of the High Schools, Material Equipment for School and College English, Possibility of Scientific Investigation of Problems of English Teaching, Labor and Cost of Composition Teaching in School and College.

The section meetings, so far as they are provided for at this writing, will have programs as follows: The Elementary Section, under the chairmanship of Franklin T. Baker of Teachers College, Columbia University, will consider grammar and composition, particularly the relation between them. The Secondary Section, under the chairmanship of Louise B. Stickney of the Yeatman High School, St. Louis, will discuss home reading, the use of modern books and magazines, and the possibility of dramatic representation and dramatic production.

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The Public Speaking Section, under the chairmanship of Elmer W. Smith of Colgate University, will listen to suggestions as to the place of public speaking in school and college, its relation to other English subjects and exercises, and how to articulate the college courses with those given in high schools.

The College Section, chairman uncertain, will probably give attention principally to oral composition and the preparation of college instructors. The Normal School Section, chairman also uncertain, will undertake to decide what required courses in English are essential and most valuable for graduates of high schools who are preparing to teach in the elementary schools.

All who attended the meeting last year testify to the remarkably stimulating and illuminating influence which it exerted. Never before have English teachers of all schools from various sections come to close quarters in discussion and into warm fellowship as co-workers. The organization, by its very nature, provides a unique and invaluable educational clearing-house. Its possibilities as a shaping force in the field of English are almost unlimited. It is confidently believed, therefore, that there will be a very large attendance of present and prospective members. All who are interested can give valuable assistance by extending notice of the meeting, particularly by securing suitable mention of it in the educational gatherings of the various states.

THE NATIONAL SYLLABUS

As announced in the September *Journal*, the National Education Association committee on the High-School Course has been directed to prepare a syllabus, to be published with syllabi of the other subjects by the National Commissioner of Education. The first step toward such a syllabus was taken by the National Council some time ago in the appointment of its Committee on Types of Organization of the High-School Course. This latter committee is at work collecting material, and will have the aid of the National Education Association committee in its task.

What is wanted particularly is very full information as to distinctive courses in English and the school and home conditions which each is intended to fit. Doubtless many commercial and technical schools have developed plans of English study different in many respects from the older academic courses. Moreover, an academic school in an industrial district might reasonably be supposed to have problems

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somewhat different from those of schools serving a more favored class. In all schools, such problems as the relation of grammar and composition, of literature and composition, of oral and written work, of choice of classics to literary history, and of English to other subjects, are important and often unsolved or only partly solved. The committee earnestly solicits complete and exact information as to the handling of these matters in the various schools, both public and private.

To facilitate correspondence, the names and addresses of the Council committee are here given. They are as follows: Edwin T. Reed, Agricultural College, Corvallis, Ore.; C. C. Certain, Central High School, Birmingham, Ala.; Franklin T. Baker, Teachers College, New York; Elizabeth M. Richardson, Girls' High School, Boston, Mass.; W. D. Lewis, Penn High School, Philadelphia, Pa.; Allison Gow, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, Cal.; Elizabeth G. Barbour, Girls' High School, Louisville, Ky.; E. H. Kemper McComb, Manual Training High School, Indianapolis, Ind.; Mrs. Henry Hulst, Central High School, Grand Rapids, Mich.; James F. Hosic, Chicago Teachers College, chairman. Address the member nearest you.

RESOLUTIONS

ADOPTED DECEMBER 1, 1911, BY THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH, AND ON DECEMBER 29, 1911, BY THE MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

I

We indorse the work of the Committee on English Composition Teaching of the English Section of the Central Division of the Modern Language Association. We commend the report of that committee to the attention of every English teacher and of every school officer; and request the co-operation of educational organizations, institutions, state officers, and the press, in securing for it the utmost publicity.

II

We authorize the Committee on English Composition Teaching, acting with Professor V. C. Coulter, to request state officers and high-school inspectors to furnish data with reference to the comparative cost of equipment and of instruction for the various departments in the high schools.

III

We request the attention of the United States Department of Education and of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

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to the report of the Committee on English Composition Teaching, with reference to possible publication and general distribution.

The third resolution preceding relates especially to the final report of the committee, which is now in preparation. The preliminary report of the committee, first published in April of 1911, is now in its ninth edition, and has reached a total of 15,000 copies. Orders may be addressed to the chairman, Lawrence, Kan.; rate, ten dollars a thousand with any desired modification of title-page; single copies five cents, postpaid.

The present membership of the committee, now a joint body representing two national organizations, is as follows:

F. G. HUBBARD, *University of Wisconsin*
A. B. NOBLE, *Iowa State College*
V. C COULTER, *Warrensburg Normal School, Mo.*
J. M. THOMAS, *University of Minnesota*
H. G. PAUL, *University of Illinois*
E. M. HOPKINS, Chairman, *University of Kansas*

THE STUDY OF ENGLISH

It is a lamentable fact that ability to use the English language correctly, idiomatically, and gracefully is seldom found among young people who have passed through the high schools. The formation of the National Council of Teachers of English is an attempt to remedy this deficiency, and every man or woman whose ear has been offended by the barbarisms of common speech will hope it may lead to better methods of teaching. Yet the fact remains that young and old are more influenced by the language used in daily life and in printed matter not of the textbook sort than by rules and examples, however carefully studied.

The general use of good English by adults would make it vastly easier for the young to learn to speak and write well. Responsibility for existing conditions cannot be placed wholly on the teachers, though modern education is undoubtedly diffuse and concentration is needed. Americans of foreign birth who learn English from books and contact with cultivated persons usually speak more correctly than the native-born college graduate. This is partly because they are more ambitious for excellence in the language. Their children, however, may easily fall into our slipshod use of English. Why not cultivate the intelligent foreigner's attitude toward English?—*Chicago Record-Herald*, December 4, 1911.

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OFFICERS OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH AND OF ASSOCIATIONS AFFILIATED WITH THE COUNCIL

NATIONAL COUNCIL

President, Fred N. Scott, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.
Secretary, James F. Hosic, Chicago Teachers College, Chicago.

INDIANA ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

President, W. W. Livengood, Shortridge High School, Indianapolis, Ind.
Secretary-Treasurer, Odessa Zeis, High School, Wabash, Ind.

ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

President, James F. Hosic, Chicago Teachers College, Chicago.
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President, Charles E. Rhodes, 507 Potomac Ave., Buffalo, N.Y.
Secretary, Edwin Fairley, 282 Quincy St., Brooklyn, N.Y.

ENGLISH SECTION OF THE MICHIGAN SCHOOLMASTERS' CLUB

President, Edwin L. Miller, Central High School, Detroit, Mich.
Secretary, Miss Caroline E. Britten, 123 Second St., Jackson, Mich.

NEW YORK CITY ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

President, Edwin Fairley, 282 Quincy St., Brooklyn, N.Y.
Secretary, Charles A. Gaston, Richmond Hill H. S., New York.

NEW JERSEY ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

President, J. Milnor Dorey, 66 Prospect St., Trenton, N.J.
Secretary, Junius W. Stevens, Barrington H. S., Newark, N.J.

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

President, William A. Neilson, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.
Secretary, F. W. C. Hersey, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

MEMPHIS (TENN.) ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

President, Helen Thorburn, High School, Memphis, Tenn.
Secretary, Mary V. Little, 576 Linden Ave., Memphis, Tenn.

MISSOURI ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

President, C. B. Goddard, Yeatman High School, St. Louis, Mo.
Secretary-Treasurer, V. C. Coulter, Normal School, Warrensburg, Mo.

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UPPER OHIO VALLEY ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

President, Ernest C. Noyes, Fifth Ave. High School, Pittsburgh, Pa.
Secretary-Treasurer, Orton Lowe, 1213 Mill St., Pittsburgh, Pa.

KANSAS ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

President, Edwin M. Hopkins, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kan.
Secretary, Charlotte M. Leavitt, Washburn College, Topeka, Kan.

LOUISVILLE (KY.) ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

President, Elizabeth G. Barbour, Girls' High School, Louisville, Ky.
Secretary, H. B. Moore, 1410 Amber St., Louisville, Ky.

HIGH SCHOOL SECTION, MICHIGAN TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

President, J. Remsen Bishop, Eastern High School, Detroit, Mich.
Secretary, Edwin L. Miller, Central High School, Detroit, Mich.

The Central Division of the Modern Language Association of America will meet in Indianapolis, December 26, 27, and 28. The Eastern Division will meet at Philadelphia on the same days. The English section at Indianapolis will receive the final report of the Committee on Composition, of which Edwin M. Hopkins of Kansas University is chairman, and it will discuss the question, "What is the best preparation for a teacher of college English?"

The claims of the National Council and the *English Journal* were presented to several of the large summer schools in the South by Professor Maurice G. Fulton of Davidson College. He reports a lively interest in the new movement. Several associations of English teachers will probably result from his visits.

BOOK NOTICES

[Mention under this head does not preclude review elsewhere.]

The American Secondary School and Some of Its Problems. By JULIUS SACHS. New York: Macmillan, 1912. Pp. 295. $1.10 net.

A new volume in the Teachers' Professional Library by the professor of secondary education in Teachers College, Columbia University. The author centers his attention upon the preparation of the teacher and the present status and policy of the public and private secondary school.

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The Learning Process. By STEPHEN SHELDON COLVIN. New York: Macmillan, 1912. Pp. 336. $1.25 net.

A very satisfactory treatment, in which the results of modern experimental psychology and pedagogy are made available for the general student of education.

Education: A First Book. By EDWARD L. THORNDIKE. New York: Macmillan, 1912. Pp. 292. $1.25 net.

Likely to appear technical and somewhat fragmentary to those not familiar with the author's previous works. An account of the attempt to establish a scale for measurement of excellence in composition is included.

Current Educational Activities. By JOHN PALMER GARBER. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1912.

The annals of educational progress throughout the world in 1911. Brief but remarkably comprehensive, considering the limited space.

The Dramatic Festival: A Consideration of the Lyrical Method as a Factor in Preparatory Education. By ANNE A. T. CRAIG. With a Foreword by PERCIVAL CHUBB and an Introduction by PETER W. DYKEMA. New York: Putnam, 1912. Pp. 363. $1.25.

The aim is to show how the festival should function in the life of the school throughout the year and to suggest the forms of activity suitable to successive grades.

The Theory and Practice of Technical Writing. By SAMUEL CHANDLER EARLE. New York: Macmillan, 1911. Pp. 301. $1.25 net.

Particularly adapted to classes in engineering.

Written English: A Guide to the Rules of Composition. By JOHN ERSKINE and HELEN ERSKINE. New York: The Century Co., 1911.

A small handbook to aid the college Freshman in avoiding common errors in grammar, punctuation, etc.

The Ballad in Literature. By T. F. HENDERSON. New York: Putnam, 1912. Pp. 128. $0.40 net.

A recent addition to the series of "Manuals of Science and Literature" issued by the Cambridge University Press.

English Literature: Mediaeval. By W. P. KER. New York: Holt & Co., 1912. $0.50.

No. 45 of the "Home University of Modern Knowledge."

Christopher Marlowe: Tamburlaine, Doctor Faustus, The Jew of Malta, Edward the Second. With an Introduction by WILLIAM LYON PHELPS. New York: American Book Co., 1912.

The first volume of "Masterpieces of the English Drama," a series under the general editorship of Professor Schelling of the University of Pennsylvania.

The Spell of France. By CAROLINE ATWATER MASON. Boston: L. C. Page & Co., $2.50 net.

A handsomely illustrated volume of travel in southern France.

A Christmas Carol. By CHARLES DICKENS. Edited by KATHERINE GILL WEST.

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THE ENGLISH JOURNAL

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THE TEACHING OF LYRIC POETRY. II[1]

HARRY G. PAUL
University of Illinois

Teachers of literature who handle college freshmen will bear me out, I am sure, in my statement that no small part of our high-school graduates are unable to name and to distinguish the most elementary measures of English verse. Happily, however, I am very sure that the number of such students is growing smaller each year. That every student early in his high-school course should learn the simpler matters of metrics, together with illustrative lines, and should learn them as thoroughly as ever he did his multiplication tables, seems to me so obvious as scarcely to need statement. Furthermore, I am sure the wise teacher will impress upon his classes something of the special values of each of the simpler meters—how the iambic, for certain reasons, has been the favorite with our English poets; how the trochee, "the running meter," lends itself to a more rapid movement; how the dactyl received its name; and how the anapest has been used to suggest the gallop of the horse. He will also point out the effect of the mingling of these various meters, both in the greater poetry such as "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso" and in such lighter verse as Bryant's "Robert of Lincoln."

In developing for students the idea of the varying importance of the different syllables in a line of poetry, one may use with effect the device of assigning to each syllable a comparative numerical

[1] Part I of this article appeared in the October number.

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value, as is done in Gummere's *Poetics* and elsewhere. Furthermore, no teacher should be ignorant of the chapter on the "Musical Power" in Johnson's *Elements of Literary Criticism*, which emphasizes the difference between meter and rhythm. In bringing out this distinction, one may well begin with Shakspere's Sonnet XXXI, "Let me not to the marriage of true minds," and point out, as Professor Johnson has done, how this sonnet possesses a number of very distinct rhythmical movements which throw the emphasis upon certain important words. As another good illustration of this rhythmical movement may be cited Longfellow's sonnet on "Milton," which produces the effect of two immense waves, each gradually gaining power and height, coming to a crest, then breaking and plunging, and finally "flooding all the soul with their melodious seas." Or one may show the class how the opening lines of Shakspere's "When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes" move monotonously back and forth, much like a beast across its cage, till finally the line "Then in these thoughts myself almost despising," which through its first ten syllables has, so to speak, been sounded on one note, breaks with the added light syllable and mounts with the lark to "heaven's gate." When students understand that the metrical structure is the framework or skeleton which supports the more beautiful rhythmical structure, they have taken an important step toward better reading.

How much time should be spent in discussing the technique of different lines, of stanzaic structure, and of the larger poetic forms, will, of course, vary with the number of lessons at the disposal of each teacher. A certain amount of such study is profitable, even for the high-school student, for he loses no small part of his legitimate enjoyment if he does not understand the rules of the particular game the poet is playing. The student who fails to appreciate the fact that the beauty of Milton's blank verse is due in very great measure to his magnificent ability in ordering his pauses has missed one of the greatest charms of the poem; or, to instance an illustration from the lyric, the pupil should in some measure, at least, be brought to realize how much of the charm of Herrick's "To Daffodils" is due to the exquisite variations of the length of lines and the consequent delicacy of rhythm. Again,

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he must be brought to feel the inherent vigor and glow of such verse forms as that of Drayton's "Battle of Agincourt" and should have this idea more firmly impressed by a comparative study of several of the poems employing practically this same stanzaic structure. He should know as well as he knows that five times five equals twenty-five the scheme of the Spenserian stanza and of our two chief forms of the sonnet. Here again, however, let me repeat that these are, of course, only tools, useful ones but of themselves possessed of no more value than are the multiplication tables.

While dealing with these subjects some teachers either require or encourage students to compose verses in the different forms of the lyric. A few years ago Mr. Briggs, then of the Eastern Illinois Normal School, printed in a little pamphlet a number of the best of such verses written by one of his classes. In these pages one finds examples not only of the simpler forms but also of the more difficult French schemes; and many of these verses are so good as to discredit his modest little motto from Dr. Johnson that the wonder is not that the dog dances no better but that it dances at all. While in this matter of requiring or asking verse each teacher must be a law unto himself, I believe that the experiment is well worth the time and effort; for students not only learn something of verse form, but they also gain an increasing appreciation of alliteration and assonance, and experience something of the creative delight in attempting, usually with crude results, it must be confessed, something of onomatopoetic effects.

Through the study of these more minute elements of the poet's musical art must, of course, come no small part of the delight in lyric verse. The skilful use of alliteration, in which Coleridge came so close to perfection, Milton's fondness for alliterations in *w*, Ben Jonson's fine repetition of vowel sounds in his "Hymn to Diana," Poe's

> Banners yellow, glorious, golden,
> On the roof did float and flow;
> This, all this was in the olden
> Time long ago!

Tennyson's "Murmur of innumerable doves in immemorial elms," Freneau's "Lately mourned her murdered mate," and a hundred

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others, all suggest a pleasant part of the teaching of the musical quality of the lyric upon which, perhaps, it is unnecessary for us to dwell. Certain poems, such as Dryden's great odes, were written to be sung by a chorus, accompanied by an orchestra; and students grow intensely interested in deciding what should be the distribution of the different sections of the poem among the four voices, and in indicating what would be the most effective musical accompaniment. Furthermore, certain of the simpler lyrics also suggest a very distinct musical accompaniment; even the least musical of the class recognize a difference when they compare the movement of Shakspere's "Come away, come away, death," with that of "O Mistress mine, where are you roaming." Then, too, if the oft repeated comparisons of Milton's singing quality with the notes of an organ, and of Macaulay's with the blast of a trumpet, be suggestive, may not the student well be asked to hunt some such comparisons for, let us say, Keats, Shelley, and Longfellow? Occasionally it is well to ask how the singing voice suited for such verses as "Come live with me and be my love" would differ from that adapted to Greene's "Sweet are the thoughts." When opportunity offers, and I believe that sometimes it may well be made, the instructor may arrange to have some of these lyrics sung for the class. Such a program of Shakspere's songs is especially interesting, but best of all, perhaps, is a Burns hour. I have found students quick to value this method of interpretation; and I must confess I felt that a certain class had grown a great deal in the appreciation of the musical quality of the lyric when the students returned from hearing a well known musical setting of "Crossing the Bar" and declared that while the anthem was beautiful, there was something about the music of the verse that the arrangement had not brought out.

In considering the musical power of the lyric, we must not forget the beautiful cadences and suggestive power of particular phrases. Certain lines of poetry, such as some of Poe's lingering, melodious phrases, or Keats's fine

> magic casements, opening on the foam
> Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn,

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haunt us with a music as difficult to describe as it is easy to recognize. How much pathos, too, Keats wrings from that last word "forlorn," one of those great and not infrequent catchwords which he loves to repeat, as here, with somewhat of the effect of an echo. A careful study of the "Ode to a Nightingale" or the "Ode on a Grecian Urn" brings home to the student something of a realization of this immense power for music and beauty potential in the phrase, which made Keats declare he looked upon a fine phrase with the eye of a lover. Even a little training in observing the phrase, such as noting Milton's fondness for inverted order in such groups as "hazel copses green," "sad occasion dear," and "the still morn went out with sandals gray," does much to increase the student's pleasure in the lyric.

In the study of words and phrases the teacher may well devote some time to explaining the difference between denotation and connotation, pointing out how words possess not merely a core of meaning, but also, to use James's convenient term, a fringe of association, and how the words and phrases of the poet are freighted with suggestion. For example, the words of the first two lines of Tennyson's "Bugle Song" are simple enough,

> The splendor falls on castle walls
> And snowy summits old in story;

and yet they are potent to suggest the great world of romance. Sometimes this suggestiveness lies in the long roll of proper names, as in Milton's famous lines in the first book of *Paradise Lost*, a passage so wonderfully musical and filled with suggestion of the Orient as to deserve memorizing by every teacher of English. Or, again, a poet may be unable to tell us just what something is; so he suggests its qualities or effects to us through comparisons. Thus Shelley, in attempting to give us the song of the skylark, compares it with the songs of the poet and of the maiden, with the hue of the glow-worm, and with the scent of the rose.

In trying to bring pupils to some realization of a poet's ability to give to common words new beauty and life, I have found especially helpful one stanza from Lowell's "The Shepherd of King Admetus":

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His words were simple words enough,
And yet he used them so,
That what in other mouths was rough
In his seemed musical and low.

"Good" is a very common word; yet in his line "To the good memory of Robert Shaw," Moody used it with telling effect. "Slow" is another of these "simple words enough"; but how significant it grows when a master uses it in such a phrase as "thou foster-child of silence and slow time." Nor is it the commonplace in words alone that the poet may permeate with suggestion and life; he may be equally happy in casting a commonplace idea into a final, vital form. Shakspere, Pope, Gray, and Emerson here suggest a wealth of illustrative material. In this connection one is reminded of the classification of phrases, given in Johnson's *Elements of Literary Criticism*, as dexterous, felicitous, and dynamic. This distinction is frequently very helpful to the student, although, of course, it may be overworked, just as some teachers waste valuable time in classifying figures of speech.

Some time may well be spent in considering the writer back of the poem, and in bringing out students' ideas regarding him. This exercise is especially valuable in sending pupils to a re-examination of their texts and in affording a somewhat different standpoint from which they may view the lyrics they have read. It is obvious that few valuable opinions of authors can be formed from so small a number of lyrics as usually represent most of the poets in Palgrave; and even if the poems be fairly numerous, one must ever consider how far they are indicative of the author's own emotions or beliefs. The latter objection, however, is hardly a vital one, expecially if the teacher uses discretion in directing what poems shall be included in such a discussion; while the former may be largely obviated by more extensive reading either by a part or by the whole of the class. Students sometimes do surprisingly well in discussing the range of a poet's verse, and in deciding what subjects brought out his best work. They soon learn to select any passages where the poet has manifested especially delicate and acute observation of nature and of men. In studying Burns's poetry, or such a lyric as Mickle's "The Sailor's Wife," they soon

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realize how the author has seen the beautiful and the significant in the commonplace; and I have known more than one student to be thus quickened with a keener sight, a more delicate ear, and a heart more sympathetic with the lives of others.

In trying to discover something of the man back of the verse, we must ever remember that some poets repay such study much more handsomely than do others. Poe, for instance, was very autobiographic in some of his work. When, after a little judicious preparation on the part of the teacher, the student is allowed to find for himself such characteristic passages as the one from the "Raven":

> some unhappy master,
> Whom unmerciful disaster followed fast, and followed faster,
> Till his songs one burden bore,
> Till the dirges of his hope the melancholy burden bore
> Of never, nevermore—

he has learned a lesson in criticism he will not soon forget. In the case of a writer such as Poe, whose bulk of verse is comparatively small, students soon come to realize that his range of subjects is very narrow, and that he is most thoroughly at home in the "valley of the shadow of death." In the case of a more voluminous writer, such as Whittier, the teacher may, by a judicious choice in the assignment of readings, give the pupils a sufficiently large number of examples from each of the divisions of the Quaker poet's verse to afford them considerable ground for comparisons. For a rapid and frequently very valuable comparison, the teacher may well direct discussion to the numerous little groups of lyrics similar either in tone or in that they deal with a common subject. Thus, with Marlowe's "Passionate Shepherd to His Love" may naturally be compared "The Nymph's Reply" and Campion's "Fortunati Nimium." The regret with which thoughtful men look back upon their childhood appeals all the more vividly when one brings together, let us say, Vaughn's "Retreat," Wordsworth's "Ode on the Intimations," Lamb's "We were two pretty babes," and Hood's "I remember! I remember!" Longfellow's "Hymn to the Night" and Shelley's "To-night" offer excellent chances for comparison and contrast, as do also Sidney's, Shakspere's, and Daniel's

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treatments of Sleep. These nineteenth-century poets just mentioned have each written a beautiful serenade worthy of comparative study.

Furthermore, such comparisons of authors of the same age, it goes almost without saying, afford a most vital means of apprehending the characteristics of that particular period. A student may recite glibly enough from a text that "one of the distinguishing features of the Cavalier poetry was a dashing impudence;" but only after he has read "Shall I wasting in despair," "Why so pale and wan, young lover," and "Gather ye rosebuds while ye may," and has noticed the similarity of tone, does the "dashing impudence" become anything more than an attractive phrase. The same is true, *mutatis mutandis*, of each of the different periods. It is only through feeling in a dozen different instances the lyric charm of the Elizabethans that the student really begins to know something of their "full-throated ease" of song.

One can scarcely overestimate the importance of combining such extensive reading with the more intensive work. That much careful reading gives a basis for a finer appreciation and a sounder judgment is a truth as vital as it is commonplace. To such reading the student comes with a mind stimulated by the careful work of the classroom; his eye is better trained, and his artistic sense is more fully alive for enjoyment. He begins to discover things, and great is his joy therein. One of the deepest pleasures of teaching comes, I feel, from watching students make such discoveries and from discussing with them these new loves. After all, such results are the permanent and valuable things of our work. If we are spending our time simply putting students through a series of gymnastics based upon Palgrave if at the end of our efforts most of the class leave their *Golden Treasury* never to return to it and enlist among the devoted readers of the *Saturday Evening Post*, let us ponder whether we might not be doing greater and more remunerative service by buying a ticket to Texas, there to engage in raising annually four mammoth crops of luscious white onions.

In attracting students to lyric verse, the teacher will sometimes give over the lesson of the day and read to the class from some author he especially admires. Personally I like to spend an hour

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bringing before the class such a poet as William Vaughn Moody, whose untimely death we must all deplore; and I have been glad to discover from consulting the library records and the local book dealers that some members of the class have been tempted to learn more of the poet whose name had been to many of them utterly unknown.

One other topic may claim our attention for a moment: What use shall we make of the comments of the critics? Though this question applies with equal force to all the different forms of literature, it is an exceedingly practical one to consider in planning our presentation of the short poem. I am thoroughly convinced that within the last ten years teachers of English have been coming more and more to realize the importance of an honest expression of the student's actual likes and dislikes, and to place an ever-diminishing insistence upon his accepting and repeating the judgments of another. Even today, perhaps, one may find schools where more liberality is still desirable. Occasionally one visits a class where the students preserve the attitude of a little fellow in a Sunday-school class of whom a certain teacher of English delights to tell. In discussing the lesson which dealt with the Commandments, the teacher asked, "Frank, what may a boy rightly do on the Sabbath?" And Frank, ready and anxious to please and to give the answer he thought expected, replied, "Read his Bible and go to Sunday school." It is unnecessary to make the application; but Frank's older brothers and sisters enrolled in the high school and college are entirely too numerous. Respect for the student's opinions, however raw and crude, intellectual honesty and frankness are valuable tonics in strengthening their taste for the best literature. Especially must the teacher emphasize the importance of intellectual and critical honesty when he assigns subjects for written reports. As a rule it is better to ask a class to read more extensively from the authors studied rather than to dip into the critics. Of course an occasional exception to this plan may be expedient and highly desirable. For example, one may well read to his students a part of Matthew Arnold's critical estimate of Gray and then discuss with them the points there raised; or one may select a sentence or two from some famous piece of criticism and ask the opinion of the

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class regarding the judgment there expressed. Frequently one may kill two birds with a single stone by bringing into class such tributes as Arnold's to Shakspere, Wordsworth's to Milton, some of the many verses in honor of Burns, or Longfellow's sonnets on Chaucer, Shakspere, Milton, and Keats. Frequently such poems serve to give vent to what the student himself has felt but never could have expressed. Thus, too, there are many phrases, such as the "poet's poet" and the "God-gifted organ voice," which have grown so commonplace to the veteran teacher of English that he is almost ashamed to look them in the face as they come around with the revolving years. Let us take heart, however, from the example of the old toymaker, who, when asked why he did not invent some new dolls for Christmas, replied: "My friend, you forget that every year there is a new crop of babies." Of course the wise teacher is adding to his stock year after year through his ever-widening reading, and woe be to him if he does not; but he must remember that such phrases as those just quoted have become little *loci critici*, valuable and almost necessary to the student, however trite to himself.

Occasionally we may well call in the painter's art to assist the student to clearer critical conceptions. From time to time good artists have attempted to illustrate different lyrics. Taylor's illustrations of Longfellow are well known; some good illustrations have appeared from time to time in *Scribner's*, such as those of "L'Allegro" and of "Il Penseroso" if memory serves aright, in the Christmas number of about 1902. Many teachers have used with their classes the Doré illustrations, especially those of the *Ancient Mariner;* and I have known a few teachers who have prepared from them a series of lantern slides. I have been interested, though, in the frequent expressions of disappointment from high-school students upon viewing these Doré illustrations. Frequently they realize that the pictorial art is inadequate to express the suggestion and magical charm of Coleridge's marvelous verses. Once in a while I have asked pupils to point out passages that might be selected by an artist who had received instructions to illustrate the particular poem we happened to be studying. This device gives criticism something of the attractiveness of a game.

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Greene's "Sweet are the thoughts that savour of content" and Campion's "Fortunati Nimium" afford capital material for such an exercise.

Then, when the study is completed, when we have done all we can toward helping the student to a better intellectual conception and to a finer emotional appreciation of this species of literature, and have introduced him to as many poets as our time warrants, let him come back to the lyric with added knowledge and power, to read and re-read for the fun of the thing. Let the pupils repeat the lines, stanzas, or lyrics they have come especially to love; and most of them, I know, will close their study of Palgrave with genuine regret. One last word: Be careful in judging just how deeply the emotions of these poets have touched those of the members of the class. I recall one student who was continually looking out of the window till I was tempted to wring his little Teutonic neck; and yet in after years I found that these lyrics had sunk deeply into his heart. It is not always the student who is the liveliest with his hand and glibbest with his tongue that has learned best the value of the lyric.

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PROGRESS IN STANDARDIZING THE MEASUREMENT OF COMPOSITION[1]

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I wish to call attention to a recent investigation which has for its purpose, "to establish standards of composition that will make it possible to compare the work done in one school with that done elsewhere and to make it difficult for mere opinion to control so much of our schoolroom practice." I refer to the attempt of Professor Thorndike and Mr. Hillegas of Columbia University to construct a concrete scale of measurement for composition.

In nearly every form of human effort except teaching, the efficiency of different methods of procedure can be and is tested by results. That school of medicine whose practitioners cure the greatest proportion of their patients quickly becomes the most popular. Comparison of the results gained by automobile delivery with those gained by horse and wagon is driving the horse from our streets. Even in the humble field of poultry-raising comparison of the number of eggs laid in a month by the same number of hens under different systems of feeding has proved what kind of food will produce the greatest results in eggs. It is only in teaching, and this is especially true of the teaching of English, that when our favorite theory is subjected to the test of pragmatism, Does it work? we must answer, "We don't know positively, but we hope it works, or we think it ought to work."

Now just as the study of methods of business has produced the new application of science to industry known as scientific management, so the demand of the age for the measurement of results is bringing forth a new science of education based upon exact measurement and judgment by ascertained facts. As Professor Thorndike has said, "It is fruitless to keep only the debit account of time and

[1] Read before the Joint Conference on English at the National Education Association in Chicago, July 11, 1912.

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money expended, of courses of study and methods of teaching, if we leave the credit account of results achieved, the products of education, vague and uncertain." The need of measuring our results requires no demonstration; but the keeping of an accurate account presents a problem of peculiar difficulty. If education has lagged behind business in testing theories by results, it has been because there have existed no adequate means of gauging skill in solving arithmetical problems, of measuring knowledge of Latin, or of estimating ability to write English.

To be sure, we have for decades attempted to measure composition by percentages or letters, or by vague adjectives like good, fair, and excellent. But can any teacher tell just when a composition ceases to be worth 90 and is worth only 85, or when it rises to 95? And will any teacher assert that the difference between 50 and 60 is the same as that between 90 and 100? Yet in any valid scale ten units should represent the same step in whatever part of the scale they be taken. If we abandon the percentage system in favor of letters and make A stand for excellent, B for good, C fair, and so on, we find it equally hard to draw a line and say that all paragraphs on one side of this line are fair and that all on the other are poor. In addition, we are compelled with the letter system to give the same mark to compositions varying greatly in merit. This has caused many schools to add plus and minus signs to the letters; but who can determine the point at which a composition falls below B minus in merit and yet is worth C plus? Furthermore, whatever system is used, all of us know that teachers working independently will scarcely ever grade a set of compositions alike.

In estimating the merit of specimens of composition, teachers probably show greater differences in judgment than they exhibit in grading pupils' performances in any other subject. Though the extraordinary complexity of the facts to be observed and estimated in forming any judgment, together with the variable emphasis placed by individuals upon vocabulary, sentences, paragraphing, thought, etc., makes uniformity of judgment difficult, it is not impossible. Differences in the rating of the same paper exist not because teachers disagree about what constitutes

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merit in composition, for on essentials there is in theory substantial agreement. The chief difficulty is the vagueness with which standards have been defined. When we say of a boy's composition that the sentences, paragraphing, and progress of thought are *good*, we are as inaccurate as we are when we say it was *hot* here yesterday. If we say the thermometer stood at 90° here yesterday, we have measured the heat by a scientific standard which has the same meaning in Boston as in Chicago and by which we can compare the heat in one place with that in another. On the other hand, if we say that the composition is worth 90 per cent, though we have measured it after a fashion, the standard does not have the same meaning in Boston as in Chicago. It is not the same with any two teachers, and is more worthless for purposes of comparison than 90° Fahrenheit and 80° Centigrade would be; for the two temperature scales can be reduced to a common basis, but no two teachers' percentages have any common basis. Our present methods of measuring compositions are controlled too much by personal opinion, which varies with the individual. What is wanted is a clear-cut, concrete standard of measurement which will mean the same thing to all people in all places and is not dependent upon the opinion of any individual.

This want Professor Thorndike and Mr. Hillegas[1] have attempted to supply by the construction of a series of samples of composition with which specimens to be measured can be compared. This series of samples, each differing from the preceding by an equal degree of merit, makes a uniform scale of measurement *applicable universally*. In applying this scale, a specimen of composition to be valued is compared with one sample after another till a sample is found precisely equal in merit, just as in determining the note sounded by a tuning-fork we had found we might compare it with one note after another of the musical scale sounded on a piano till we could fix its proper place.

Though at first thought it may seem impossible to construct such a scale for composition, the means by which it has been done is as simple as it is sound; namely, the opinion of a considerable

[1] A full account of his scale is given by Mr. Hillegas in the *Teachers College Record* for September 1912.

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number of competent judges. Certainly, the test that has determined what books are classics and that lies behind the principle of good use in language is the best that could be devised for determining a scale of measurement for composition. Mr. Hillegas' scale represents the rankings of several hundred carefully selected judges, who were asked to arrange a large number of samples of young peoples' composition in order of merit. From their rankings of this large set, the scale of ten samples, ranging in value by equal steps from 0 to 937 units was derived by applying the theory that, "Differences equally often noticed are equal, unless the differences are either always or never noticed." That is, if 75 per cent of the judges noticed that sample A was better than sample B and the same number noticed that B was better than C, it was assumed that the difference in merit between A and B was exactly the same as that between B and C; or that the difference between A and C was exactly twice the difference between B and C, or B and A. In fact, when two samples were found such that 75 per cent of the judges agreed in calling one better than the other, the difference in merit between them is just the difference used as the unit in this scale. The zero point is shown by an artificial sample produced by an adult who tried to write very poor English.

Of course, such a scale is open to some objections, notably that the samples it contains, which vary in length from five to ten printed lines, are too short to test sustained power or skill in arrangement of the larger units of composition. Some may say that judgment of composition by the use of such a scale is too mechanical. Still, what is essentially the same method, comparison with samples of fixed value, was recommended by no less sensitive a critic than Matthew Arnold when he advised the committing to memory of fine passages of poetry that they might serve as touchstones by which to test the value of unfamiliar verse.

This scale marks a great advance toward precision in the rating of composition. It will enable any teacher to correct his individual judgment by reference to the combined opinions of many good judges. It will afford him a ready means of determining the relative progress of pupils under different systems of instruction so that when asked, "Does this theory work?" he can say, "Yes"

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or "No" with conviction. Even mental standards will gain in precision as teachers become accustomed to a uniform standard. Composition equivalent to six on Hillegas' scale will be a much more accurate description than fair; just as our familiarity with the thermometer has made fifty degrees a more precise description than chilly.

It is to supervisors, however, that this scale will be of the most value. By it they will be able to compare classes of the same grade in different schools, in different cities, or under different teachers. Such a scheme for measurement will also afford accurate definitions of the standards required for promotion. Employers will find in it an accurate means of defining the degree of excellence expected in an applicant for a position. Even the pupil may profit by studying such a scale, for it will show him just what he is expected to accomplish and enable him to measure his own progress.

In short, Mr. Hillegas has shown that it is possible to standardize our measurement of composition and to make it precise. Soon we shall think it as ridiculous to measure compositions by excellent, good, and fair, as to measure distance by units like as far as a man can jump. This investigation signifies the dawn of the day when the incapable teacher shall be unable to take refuge in the belief that no one can measure the results of his work; when the thoughtful teacher may be able to tell by accurate tests whether his theories are true or false; and when all teachers may feel that their gradings are just and uniform because based on a definite, fixed standard.

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WRITTEN COMPOSITION IN THE HIGH SCHOOL[1]

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The English teacher, more than any other perhaps, needs to keep in mind Carlyle's words, "Let a man do his work; the fruit of it is the care of Another than he." What follows is a discussion of my own "work" in written composition. For convenience, I shall divide the subject into three main parts—formal work, forms of composition, and variations—and a fourth subsidiary part, the English teacher's duodecalogue, which will appear as a corollary to the preceding.

The formal work of English is, to the majority of English teachers, the most difficult to teach, because it is the least interesting; yet it is the most necessary. To attempt to teach our subject without it would be as disastrous to our literary edifice as the lack of a foundation would be to the mason's more material structure. In the immediate past, we have been neglecting, to a certain extent, this drill work for the cultural side, hence from the business world has come the cry, "We asked you for bread and you gave us—not a stone, but cake." We are responding now to this insistent call. The seven divisions of "formal English," as generally understood, are as follows: spelling, grammar, use of words, punctuation, practice in sentence forms, outlining, and the composition as a whole.

The words for the spelling-lessons have been obtained in three ways: from the girls' own compositions and test papers, from the texts read in class, and from science and history papers. For this method notebooks have been used, not only the student's individual property but the "class spelling-book." The latter is ruled in columns and passed down the aisle every time papers are returned, not only in the English room but in the history and science classes

[1] Delivered before the Maryland State Teachers' Association at Braddock Heights, Md., June 26, 1912.

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as well. Into it each girl, after a visit to the dictionary, writes correctly the words she has misspelled. These English, history, and science "class spelling-books" are kept by the English teacher, to form, together with the texts above mentioned, the basis of all spelling-lessons. The old-fashioned written kind, with the words defined and used in sentences, holds still its important place, but the monotony is varied by what I have chosen to call a "twentieth-century spelling-bee." In preparation for this, each girl is given only two words, for the pronunciation, spelling, definition, and use of which she is held responsible. The whole list, however, is put on the board the day before the match and copied, in its entirety, into the individual notebooks. Leaders, chosen by the class, in their turn choose the girls for their respective sides. Then the first girl on one side asks the first girl on the other any question she—the first girl—may choose, which must be really *answered* by her opponent with a sentence in which one of the words previously assigned to the opponent is used correctly. The girl answering concludes by spelling and defining her words. The class, and ultimately the teacher, is the judge of the correctness of the response. If the girl misses in any detail, she must sit down, but a chance is given her "side" to redeem the mistake, if it can. Strict tally is kept on the board of the faults in the four details—pronunciation, spelling, definition, and use in sentences, and these faults added to the number of girls missing determine the losing side.

In grammar, though some actual parsing is done, emphasis is laid upon the avoidance of common errors, for which chap. xi of Thomas and Howe's *Composition and Rhetoric* has proved extremely helpful.

For the use of words and especially the avoidance of violations of good use, chap. v of the above-mentioned book has been used advantageously.

The rules for punctuation, principally those for quotation marks, the comma, semicolon, and colon, are taught by precept and example.

To weave the choppy "baby-sentence," by means of transition words, phrases, and clauses, into a graceful paragraph; to separate

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the rambling "periodless" page into clear, well-defined sentences, is the work of a literary Hercules, which we must all try valiantly to emulate. Often the spelling and sentence lesson may be combined, the words given being used in compound loose sentences and in complex periodic. Frequently, too, a composition may be marked for the number of different transition words, phrases, and clauses used. The overworked "and" and "but" are thus suppressed and a much-needed variety is gained.

Next comes outlining, both of ready-made material and of original compositions, all skeleton outlines consisting of three parts—though the first may be omitted—the introduction, body, and conclusion. Good selections for descriptive and expository forms, and for narration also, in the poem and short story, may be taken from the various rhetorics. But for longer outline work on the narrative, *Ivanhoe* has been found to answer the purpose better than any other classic, because it alone may be outlined in the three ways of periods, places, and chief events. The periods fall easily into the nine days, making it interesting to find out where each character was on each of the nine days. Then, too, the principal three places, Ashby-de-la-Zouche, Torquilstone, and Templestowe, stand out prominently, with the events circling momentously around the tournament, the storming of the castle, and the judicial combat.

In teaching the composition as a whole, board-work has played an important factor. One class was divided into six sections, to each of which was given one of the six scenes in the *Ancient Mariner*. Then each girl was told to work up her scene in as correct and as vivid language as possible and to be prepared to write it on the board the next morning, when constructive criticisms were made by both the class and the teacher until a fairly good description was obtained. The girl whose work was made the basis of criticism was entitled to call the revised composition hers, while the rest of the class had to vary theirs. As a rule, it took six days to obtain six creditable productions, and on the seventh day each girl handed in her six scenes carefully corrected and re-written. The character sketches and scenes from *Lorna Doone* were taken in the same way. Up to date, the laboratory method has

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not been used much by the overburdened English teacher, not because she has not been awake to the advantages of it, but simply because she has not been able to find the time. When we have our theme-reader present during the whole day, as the science teacher has her laboratory assistant, then we may hope for wonderful results from the individual conference. It is to the future we leave the full realization of this practical dream.

Under my second main heading I have put the six forms of composition: letter-writing, narration, description, exposition, argument, and poetry.

The form used most in the world, the letter, is, in many cases, that used least in school. Lately, however, owing to the growth of the commercial department perhaps, increased emphasis has been laid upon this medium of expression. Two weeks at the beginning of each term is the minimum amount of time which should be given to what has often proved the by-path to business and social success. Of business letters there are six recognized kinds: application, recommendation, order, acknowledgment, introduction, and information. Each one of these may in turn prove as fruitful as the Japanese egg which contains myriads of smaller eggs within itself; for instance, the first, the letter of application, may be for a position as stenographer or teacher or nurse or salesman. With the social letter, comprising the formal and informal, may be taught the little social amenities by which everyone is judged more or less. Here should be learned the time-honored convention that the acceptance or regret must be couched in the same form as the invitation; that courtesy demands a reason for a "regret"; that to show a true appreciation in a "thank-you" note the gift should be mentioned, and so on. In the informal letters, expression of the student's individuality was encouraged, but in order not to have the letter rambling, a general theme was suggested, such as, "My Castles in the Air and How They Fell." Interest has always been manifested in the lessons on the informal note, for the pupils are eager to know just the right way to write notes of condolence, congratulation, "thank-you," bread-and-butter, invitation, and acceptance or regret. "Bread-and-butter" is the name I have given to the note written to one's hostess immediately after one's return home from a visit.

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Practice in narration, which forms a great part of first- and second-year English, was given in three ways: in the completing of stories, in the writing of original stories, and in the keeping of diaries. Reading the first part of *Marjorie Daw*, by T. B. Aldrich, the middle of *Silence*, by M. W. Freeman, and the last of *An Interrupted Message*, by F. Stockton, and letting the children fill in the missing parts, aroused enthusiastic effort. When the compositions were written, the reading of the author's story as a whole, besides satisfying the natural curiosity of the class, brought home to them in a helpful way the difference between their own crude attempts and the finished product of the master-hand. The composition of the original story was sometimes made easier by giving a climax, a storm or accident, for example, and having the class lead their events up to it in the form of an outline, before the actual writing took place. Also, current events of world-wide interest, as the Paris flood of 1910, and the "Titanic" disaster of 1912, were pressed into service as sources for probable incidents. The diary, because so seldom used in school, offered another change in the narrative program. The girls were asked to keep a diary for two or three days only, preferably days of festival importance either at school or at large, as times of basket-ball matches or Senior play, Hallowe'en or Thanksgiving.

For description, the commonplace was relegated to the background and the extraordinary brought forward. People of striking appearance—a gypsy queen or an old rag-picker—rooms under unusual conditions—after a girl has dressed for a party, or a classroom with a substitute—made interesting subjects. For scenes, material from the texts, especially from the *Ancient Mariner* and from the prelude to *Among the Hills* by J. G. Whittier, were paraphrased into prose pen-pictures. Original topics, as "A Wet Day in the City" and "The View from Our Roof-Garden," afforded opportunity for working up "atmosphere" and sense impressions.

Exposition, with its supreme requisition of clearness, brought with it not only obstacles in the way of technique but also a certain amount of dulness in the material of the "How"—"How to Make Tea" and "How to Play Basket-Ball," which are inevitable in our repertoire, as well as the ever-present character sketches; but

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discussions of current events, prize contests, such as "The Clean City Crusades," "The Injurious Effects of Tobacco," and the Medical Chirurgical Faculty's "Germ" essay of the past year, editorials, book reviews, and topics from the science courses, all served to enliven the expository writing. The best expositions I have ever had handed in to me were called "Lecture VII of Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero Worship*." Carlyle wrote only six lectures, but the girls were told to imagine that he were living today and writing a seventh essay on the representative hero of the present age. Different forms of this latter-day hero were suggested: the statesman, scientist, and philanthropist; and as examples Lincoln, Roosevelt, Edison, Luther Burbank, Jane Addams, and Florence Nightingale. These were the choice of the majority, though many others, too, were called heroes.

With us, argument was confined in the first and second years to informal oral debates, in the third and fourth years to preparation from texts, and then in the fourth year alone to the written brief and argument and the formal debate. The argument of Comus and the Lady, in Milton's *Comus*, Carlyle's positive and negative definitions, his reasons for opinions, and his proof of statements, in his *Heroes*, a brief of Burke's *Speech on Conciliation*, and the study of Laycock and Spofford's *Manual of Argumentation*, all prepared for the written argument and formal debate. Some of the questions were: *Resolved*, That high-school scholarships to college should be awarded by examinations; That the House of Lords was justified in rejecting the 1910 "Budget" of the House of Commons; That the armies of the world should immediately disband.

Little, if any, compulsory work was demanded in poetry; but versifying was encouraged about once a term in each class. Good results were obtained with such stories as "The Golden Touch," written in ballad form; with the continuation of the journey of the "Traveller" to America, in the heroic couplet; and of contrasts, such as "Summer" and "Winter," based on Milton's *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*. With the initial lines given, little season poems were also produced by the youthful versifiers.

Outside of the inspirational power, which is the highest in all teaching, the most delightful and profitable part of my English

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work, both to me and the pupils, has been the variations from routine methods. These variations I have grouped under four headings: individual work, co-operative work, correlation, and the taking of minutes.

The individual work, all of which was written at home and read in class, consisted of four kinds of reports: the report on supplementary reading, on a modern author, entailing the use of *Poole's Index* and the *Reader's Guide*, on the American novel, and on Shakespeare's plays. As one example of a report on supplementary reading *Kenilworth* may be taken. The following six topics were assigned to as many groups: diary of Amy Robsart, diary of the Earl of Leicester, the principal five dramatic scenes, the festivities of Kenilworth, five character sketches, and a book review. For the report on a modern author, W. D. Howells was chosen because the *Rise of Silas Lapham* is read in the fourth year. *Poole's Index* and the *Reader's Guide* gave all needed information concerning Mr. Howells' life and works. As each girl had a different report, the class acquired a maximum amount of knowledge with a minimum amount of effort. The reports on the American novel were among the most interesting features of the fourth-year work, and those on Shakespeare's plays of the third. About a month before the day appointed for the reading of the reports, the class was divided into groups of three, one girl in each group being made the leader. For the American novel day, a different American novel was assigned to each group, for the Shakespeare day a different Shakespearian play. Some of the American novels, *Coniston*, *Hugh Wynne*, and *Red Rock*, for example, illuminated the history work, as well as added zest to the English. Each leader made out the program for her own group, a sample program for a novel being the story, the historical elements, and a biographical sketch of the author. One for a play was an outline by scenes, the story, and character sketches.

Three co-operative exercises were given in the fourth year—an Arbor Day essay, serial story, and class-day play. These fulfilled a very useful office when a paper or a play was requested for the instruction or entertainment of the school audience. For the Arbor Day essay, every girl gathered her material outside but

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wrote her composition in class. After these compositions were corrected by the teacher, they were handed back to the pupils with the best parts starred. Then a girl noted for careful, accurate work was appointed to do the first compiling—to write an essay containing the best parts of all the essays; a second girl with a talent for orderly arrangement next wove the material into a more united whole; and finally, a third girl possessing some ease of style polished this composite work into a more graceful production. The serial story was somewhat more complicated, though it aroused more enthusiasm than the essay. In the beginning, an outline of the story, with as many chapters as there were girls in the class, was submitted to the teacher, who selected the best three, from which the class chose its favorite. Then, of the story thus chosen, every girl wrote the first chapter, and the best was made the first chapter of the class-serial. After it was read to the class, the second chapter was written, not necessarily following the outline, however. In the same way, with some changes to expedite matters and relieve the teacher, such as the appointment of an advisory board and editorial committee of the pupils, and, when the writing was in danger of becoming drudgery, the permission to the girls to "elect" their own chapters, the composition of the serial proceeded to its end. The theme of the class-day play was first decided upon by the committee in charge and was then discussed in class. Next, a tentative outline by acts and scenes was made, and, finally, an outline by the five divisions of the drama. The class was now ready for the individual work, which was the writing by each girl of one act, preferably that for which she was especially adapted. These acts were carefully reviewed by the teacher, the best parts starred and handed over to the co-operative committee, who revised, compiled, and interpolated until the result was ready for presentation. It was surprising from what unexpected nooks delightful little bits of originality were encouraged to peep forth into this wholesomely competitive atmosphere.

Correlation can be practiced to advantage between English and every other subject in the curriculum. Practical experience in relation to history, sciences, languages, drawing, and mathematics has brought conviction in this matter. With history English was

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allied by the spelling-book, supplementary reading, composition, and debate. The work with the spelling-book has been discussed in detail above and the supplementary reading has also been mentioned. It might be well, however, to explain more fully about the latter. Supplementary reading was done entirely outside of the classroom and consisted of two kinds, compulsory and voluntary. Of the former there were at least four books a year, assigned a month in advance to be reported on in class; of the latter the number varied with the individual, some girls not reading any, and the reporting was done to the teacher personally, before or after school hours. Of course, extra credit was attached to such reporting. All the books were taken from lists compiled in 1909 by the high-school teachers of English in Baltimore and from other lists suggested by the history teachers. Compositions on historical subjects were marked by the history teacher for content and by the English teacher for form. Whenever possible, the question for the formal debate was taken from current events of historical import, and the co-operation of the history department was engaged in the matter of reference and source books, while the English department presided over the technique of the argument. In science, also, we had the spelling-books and joint compositions. Translations in French, German, and Latin were improved by the English teacher's requiring, at unexpected intervals, the writing out in *good English* of the daily lesson in one of the above languages. This exercise the students called "spring" translations. The interchange of material between the drawing and English departments was mutually helpful. For instance, after the *Ancient Mariner* scenes were described in creditable English, they were passed over to the drawing department to be illustrated. Hallowe'en invitations and up-to-date advertisements were also made to do double duty. Graphs, the peculiar property of the mathematics group, made artistic spider-webs, in vari-colored chalks, in the diagrams of plays and in the comparison of the sentence and paragraph structure of different authors. Correlation makes English what it should be, the principal artery of the curriculum.

For the daily taking of minutes in all four years of the high school I should like to send out a strong plea. It was helpful to

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me in five ways: first, the minute-book served as an official record of the class work to which, when there was any doubt as to what was or was not done, teacher and pupil alike turned for verification; secondly, it was of inestimable value to the absentees in making up work and was thereby a great time-saver to the teacher; thirdly, the taking of minutes was the most practical training in learning to pick out the essentials of a lesson and letting the unessentials go; fourthly, as the minutes were corrected by the class and the teacher for both form and substance, the writing of the minutes became an individual exercise in sentence structure to the pupil, and the correcting a general one to the class; and fifthly, the reading of the minutes served as a review of the preceding day's work. The mechanical part of the taking of minutes need be no strain on the teacher. If the minute-book goes to the girls in rotation, down one aisle and up another, each girl will know beforehand when her turn will come and will learn, if a penalty is attached to absence, to be always present when she is to be the secretary of the class.

After speaking of the drill in formal English, of the practice in the forms of composition, and of the exercises in the variations from ordinary methods, I shall close with my corollary, which I have ventured to call the "English Teacher's Duodecalogue." Those who wish further information in regard to it I refer to the article entitled "A Composition on Red Ink," by Alfred M. Hitchcock, in the May number of the *English Journal*.

1. Call for less written work.
2. Call for shorter themes.
3. Use the waste basket.
4. Use college binders.
5. Choose sensible subjects.
6. Make your task definite.
7. Anticipate errors.
8. Teach theme organization through co-operation.
9. Decline to correct careless work.
10. As often as you receive a praiseworthy theme, tack it up somewhere; don't conceal it.
11. Don't be a ferret.
12. Give a personal conference whenever it is possible.

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POETIC TRITENESS

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The old method of teaching rhetoric, in vogue two or three decades ago, fostered the misconception that composition-writing existed for an ornamental purpose. A composition was good in proportion as similes, metaphors, and figures of speech were introduced. This mistaken notion, if college freshman papers can be taken as a criterion, has held over to our time. Poetic diction is used to excess; borrowed finery is everywhere present, and time-worn expressions crop out on every possible and impossible occasion. In trying to be poetic, the young writer is only trite. He thinks that all the expressions of immemorial composition-writers are better than anything he can say. He fails to use his own eyes, but borrows other people's. He holds no communion with nature's visible forms, but with those who have, or think they have, held communion with nature face to face. He does not hear nature's varied language, but attunes his ear to hear only what others have heard. He does not look in his heart and write, but looks in the lady novelist's heart—and copies.

Poetic triteness is found in all its alarming recklessness in student papers that deal with subjects associated with beauty. A sunrise or a sunset quite naturally throws the student into the poetic mood; papers in which the writer describes the sounds of a summer night—better call the paper "Nature's Orchestra"—will reek with poetry from beginning to end; the moon—any moon of any month—will bring on paroxysms of poetic ecstasy; and the descriptions that the student gives of his hero and heroine in his short stories—those descriptions in which the personal charms of the lovers are set forth—always produce a wealth of trite beauties.

There is always a time in these love stories when the writer takes his characters out of doors for an airing—and they generally need it. He takes them out into the night, so that they may make

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love to their heart's content, and so that he, the writer, can paint the word-picture of nature, which he feels he alone has a special commission to paint. It is a night in May, and the moon is at the full: in student love stories no one ever makes love by lamplight or in the winter time. Let us notice some of the trite expressions that are sure to appear in these poetic descriptions.

Lovers in short stories usually go forth just as the sun is setting. Before the heroine leaves the house, she had better "don an evening wrap"; she is a "mere slip of a girl," and evidently susceptible to the cool evening air. Here too is the place to give the information, if it has not already been given, that "she is a pretty, blushing maiden of nineteen summers." Now, they are ready for their walk. But do they "walk"? Never. They must "stroll." This word is reserved by young writers for lovers. Now let us see how these poetic story-writers make the sun set. The formula would seem to be easy. Put in some hilltops that the sun may "kiss," call the sun "He," speak a good deal about his "beams," say that he is "tired and going to his rest," and let him take "a farewell look at the peaceful scene before starting on his nocturnal journey"—and there you have it.

A little later, "The sun had just sunk to rest behind the western hills." The word "western" seems to be all-important, for it is rarely omitted. Then follows, "The cool shades of evening were fast coming on," or "The cool shades of dusk were fastly drawing on." Is Longfellow responsible for this oft-recurring expression? "That youth who bore mid snow and ice the banner with the strange device," began his climb, it will be remembered, as "the shades of night were falling fast." Now, if it is not too late, a "beam of the setting sun" should "shimmer" on some water—any body of water will do, placed anywhere you please. But water of course there must be, because "shimmer" is a word that cannot be picked off any bush, for instance.

It is as good a time now as any to make the lovers happy by having some birds sing. The bird usually mentioned in papers is an altogether strange bird—the "occasional" bird; as, for example, "The sweet strains of an occasional bird," etc. One of the strange things about the occasional bird is that no one

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ever *hears* him sing: his sweet strains are always "borne to one's ears." Birds "twitter" in stories, of course: they have to; we expect them to; we want them to; sometimes they "warble," and if they ever sing, they always "sing to their mate." This song of the bird generally moves the lovers deeply. It "adds" or more often "lends to the scene an unspeakable charm," or "an unspeakable sadness," or "an unspeakable gladness," or "an unspeakable witchery," or "an unspeakable enchantment"—the expression is unspeakably common and varied.

If our lovers look up at the heavens, the sky should "cast over everything a crimson glow," and perhaps it will be clearer to the reader to say that "the heavens are shot through and through with the most gorgeous colors of the Orient." If clouds are in the sky, they are always "fleecy." Just here the "twilight hush" should fall on everything; "silence reigned supreme" is also popular and is considered every whit as good. The "twilight hush" gives the writer a chance to bring in some honeyed phrases, such as, "the waves silently lap the shore," "the breeze fitfully plays with the flowers." The adverbs, like "silently" and "fitfully," in the sentences just quoted always play an important part in these poetic descriptions. The adverb is oftentimes more stereotyped, more lifeless, more insincere than the nouns and adjectives and verbs. How affected are "gently," "faintly," "softly," "fitfully," "idly," "lazily," "lingeringly," "murmuringly," and a hundred others that so easily and persistently cluster about a description of a May night. "Zephyrs" should come to us, if at all, on a May night, but how often the theme-reader wishes that these gently blowing breezes would get right up and blow out loud!

At this point, although the lovers have not walked far, they should become tired and want to sit down to rest. "Rest," though, will hardly do. "Repose" is a better word than "rest," and "recline against an oak"—a "sturdy oak," if you please—is more effective than any single, common word like "sit." Very well, they are now in a proper position to "ponder on the beauties of nature around them."

The light has not entirely left the sky yet, and our friends, the lovers, should "descry a little cottage embowered among the trees,"

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for some poetic effect always seen "in the distance" or "afar." A description of the kind under consideration, would be no description at all, if this pretty piece of stock scenery, the cottage, could not be trotted out. And now for the adjective. What kind of cottage? why, "vine-covered," of course. In pretty descriptions, cottages are "vine-covered," in summer, and "blue smoke floats lazily from the chimney," in winter. The cottage, though, must not be so far "afar" that a milkmaid cannot be seen. A milkmaid always lives in a "vine-covered" cottage. This milkmaid ought to look as milkmaids look in comic opera—young and very pretty, with a wealth of snowy white apron, stiffly starched. Like the milkmaid on the stage, she must also sing. She is far off, as has been said, but it is a still night, it will be remembered, and her voice carries wonderfully through the "ambient air." Yes, she must sing. Sing at her work? Sing as she milks the cow? Anything as truthful and prosaic as that? Hardly. The milkmaid always "sings at her task."

Right here, the hero of our story cannot be blamed if he turns his eyes away from all the "beauties that are fast waning on his sight," to gaze upon the beauties of the girl by his side. So much contemplation of nature has put both the lovers in a very loving frame of mind. The writer of our love story will now say, "Sometimes they talked, but more often they sat in silence, each gazing fondly into the eyes of the other, and reading there the old story which each feared to express." Nor at this point must their "cheeks suffused with blushes" be forgotten. It might be remarked that whenever a man turns red in student compositions, the stereotyped phrase is, "a blush suffused his manly cheek"—he never has more than one and it is always "manly." But this pretty love scene must not be interrupted. To go on: "In a moment he was on his knees before her, pouring out the love of his overflowing heart." He will not kneel on the grass, but on the "carpet of green." How it takes all the juice out of grass to call it the "carpet of green"!

He should call the girl endearing names, of course, but the girl's given name and even the good old-fashioned "sweetheart" should be used sparingly. The hero can call her names—that is,

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the reader might naturally think that he was calling her names—such as "My Goddess" and "My Ideal." These familiar pet names the student thinks lend an unspeakable tone to the story—and of course they do.

In all well-behaved love stories, a bell should now ring—a clock in a distant steeple is striking the hour. It is also well to call the church a few names. It is the "house of worship," it is the "house of prayer," and, best of all, it is sometimes the "sacred edifice." Of course one cannot do much with a church spire, but one can do something. For one thing, the writer can make it "point like a finger to heaven." Clocks, however, in church spires are more versatile and can do a number of things. They can "chime forth the hour," they can "announce the flight of time," and, when not striking, they can "mutely point to the hour of —." Why "mutely," it is hard to say; perhaps they are to be blamed for not striking all the time.

This poetic triteness is so common in papers written by college freshmen that one is led to believe that it is fostered and encouraged in the fitting-school. In some cases, students even hint that such expressions are added to "please the teacher." They seem to have been taught to conceive of a composition as something that should follow an approved method, and that exists solely to be pretty and to sound well. Students should be told early in their career as writers, and in strong language, that such fine writing does not really beautify; that it is false writing, artificial writing; that it tends to destroy self-expression; and that it cannot in the least give pleasure to the reader.

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PITY THE POOR TEACHER

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At our university, we do not as a rule examine candidates for matriculation, to see whether they are ready to enter on their college course or not; we admit most of them on certificate from the high schools of the state. Once in a while, however, a candidate presents himself who cannot prove that he has gone through the high-school mill. Him we examine.

Once it fell to my lot to give the oral part of the examination in English literature to a student of this sort. He was a bright, alert-looking chap, easy in his manners, and a good deal better dressed than the ambitious farmer boys who constituted the great majority of the unfortunate certificateless class of applicants for admission with whom during my several years of service at the institution I had had to deal. I found that he had been in the high-school mill at one time, several years back; but he had not allowed himself to be put through it, since, as he explained to me, he had after a year or two grown rather tired of the teachers.

"Aha," I said to myself, "this looks promising. A young fellow of independent judgment, at any rate, with ideas of his own; not very many, maybe, and perhaps not very good ones; but still, ideas, and his own. I will ask him a question that will bring his literary judgment into play."

Accordingly, I said to him: "You tell me that you read *Lycidas* two years ago in the Blanktown high school. Please formulate, with perfect frankness, your impression of that poem."

"You mean"—he began, hesitatingly, and looking somewhat distressed.

"Tell me what you honestly thought about *Lycidas*," I said. "Did you like it, or didn't you? If you did, why; and if you didn't, why not?"

The young man looked first relieved, then intelligent, surprised,

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and finally contemptuous. "Like it?" he said scornfully. "Of course we didn't like it. We had to read it, you know. It was work. It was a classic. Nobody likes to read a classic. We hated it."

I was shocked; not, however, because of the conception as to the necessary relation of a classic to the human mind that the young man's answer showed, nor even because the speaker professed so matter of fact a hatred of *Lycidas*, if I may put it so. For I knew that he really did not hate *Lycidas*, about which he pretty certainly knew nothing at all, or next to nothing; he merely hated the memory of certain extremely tedious hours in the schoolroom. No, what shocked me was the evidence his answer afforded that even the tender-minded student had now caught this cant about hating a piece of literature because it had a place in the school curriculum.

How familiar that cant is now! People who are entirely innocent of all substantial knowledge as to what teachers of English are attempting to do, will yet show a sufficient familiarity with the idle talk of the day about current teaching of English and its futility, to fling that gibe at the teacher: namely, that while he pretends to teach our boys and girls to love *Lycidas* and *Hamlet*—a thing he doesn't in the least pretend to do, unless he is really as much of a goose as his candid critic respectfully insinuates—he actually succeeds in doing no more than to make them hate these masterpieces.

Our poor boys and girls! How they would love all the great things in English literature, if only the teacher of English with his miserable pedantries would let them alone! How much more they would read of all the good things! The proof? See the boys and girls, tens of thousands of them, who never reach the grades in which *Julius Caesar* and *Ivanhoe* and Macaulay's *Essay on Hastings* are read as part of the school course—what notable quantities of the best poetry, fiction, and essays in the English literature of all periods they devour! How everybody, including the small boys and the small girls, used to read Shakespeare, and Chaucer, and Spenser, in the ages before there were high-school courses in English literature, with prescribed lists of classics to be read or "studied"—say, for example, in the eighteenth century!

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How singular, too, and how sad, and above all, how humiliating to those of us who would realize that the language in which and by which we live is not merely ours, but a very part of us, the English language—how humiliating that it has the evil distinction of being the only one among the so-called great languages of the world the literature in which can hardly be taught without making the taught one hate it! The boys in the great public schools of England up to comparatively recent times were not very generally flogged for their failure to attend to business, when the business was the getting of a certain quantity of Cicero or Thucydides. Byron did not say that as a boy he hated Horace. At this very moment, ten thousand teachers of Latin, and Greek, and French, and German are staggering under the supremely difficult task of trying to keep the boys and girls in their classes from reading immensely greater quantities of the literature in those languages than the teacher thinks they ought to read; so contagious is the love felt for his authors by the teacher of literature in those languages, that all the boys and girls whom he teaches catch it, and they simply will read, read, read, in hours and out.

Poor teacher of English! We set him the one impossible task in all the wide range of literature teaching; and then we scold him, and keep constantly hinting that his job deserves to be abolished, and will pretty certainly be abolished when we have moved a little farther forward in the road of educational progress. Here some crusty, practical person may be disposed to observe that the teacher of English may count himself undeservedly well off that his job hasn't already been abolished. Well, perhaps that is so. When one reads what is being somewhat abundantly said about him nowadays—not infrequently, alas, by himself—one is not free from the fear that a pedagogical reign of terror may be preparing, and, if so, that it will be the teachers of English who will be the victims.

How painful it is to have to go on living despised by all, even yourself, and at the same time, keep up a brave pretense that you not only think very well of yourself, but even regard yourself as a decently useful public servant! Rare, I think, the teacher of English must be who does not in these days have more or less

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frequent spells during which he lives through something very like this.

But even this is not the worst aspect of the situation in which his business places the teacher of English. It is a well-known fact that in order to teach a subject, it is almost necessary to have studied it a little. Now, as already suggested, we know what that almost inevitably means, in the case of English literature. Manifestly, if the student cannot read book one of *Paradise Lost*, as part of his high-school course, without coming to hate the very sight of the poem, and the sound of Milton's name, the teacher must be in a similar predicament, since he must at one time or other have studied it; at least, he must be in that predicament unless he is an abnormal sort of person in whose mind influences operate in a contrarious fashion, and is thus impelled to love what all natural-minded persons hate. This hypothesis will undoubtedly appeal to some narrow and superficial persons who fail to take account of the fact that not a few of the most commonplace, humdrum, and in all ways ordinary, men and women with whom one comes into contact have at one time or other taught English; and, obviously, abnormality is not a thing that can be put off and escaped from like a garment or an occupation.

Apparently, therefore, we are driven by facts to the conclusion that anyone who teaches English literature is almost necessarily a hypocrite. For is it not a part of accepted pedagogical theory now, that any teacher who wants to attain even a fair degree of success must on all proper occasions, but especially in the classroom, simply exude love for his subject? How painful, then, is the situation of the teacher of English literature, who almost necessarily hates *Hamlet*, yet who nevertheless feels that he must, out of professional self-respect, assume an expression of agonized rapture whenever *Hamlet* is alluded to in his presence! Until long habit makes him absolutely brazen, what shame he must feel as he looks into the clear and honest eyes of those more fortunate fellow-citizens of his who never studied English literature in the schools, and notes the all but divine joy there expressed whenever mention is made of any among the worthies of English literature, past or present; joy which tells more clearly far than words could do of

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delightful hours spent daily by the owners of those eyes in the close and uncompelled perusal of Shakespeare, Milton, and the works of the great non-best-selling moderns! How he must despise himself for continuing to accept the taxpayer's money when he notes the scowling disgust that frequently comes into the faces of the members of his class—when, for example, he instructs them to be ready by tomorrow to prove and formulate their love for the *Merchant of Venice*—and contrasts these indications of what he is accomplishing, with the evidence of his superfluity notoriously afforded by the sight of young persons whom necessity or indisposition has kept out of the high school, poring over the pages of some great English classic, when they might be reading cheap fiction or the daily paper! Ah yes, how he must feel when he realizes that it is the scowling disgust of the sophisticated youth in his classroom that expresses his own real attitude toward the great ones of English literature, rather than the serene joy in literature displayed by the pure and innocent who abound in street-cars and other public places, and who have never sat under his blighting influence!

Ah, pity the poor teacher of English literature! Like the augur in the skeptical days of ancient Rome, he knows, of course, what a fraud he is. Unlike the augur, however, he cannot get the satisfaction of a continuous jest out of his business. For his is a grim business, the functions of which, whatever persons on the outside may think, cannot be accomplished by an almost effortless conformity to routine. To keep up the pretense and save his job as long as he may, he is compelled to spend bitter and laborious hours in the study of the hated great masters of the past, and of what other impostors like himself have written about them; and this when he would fain be whiling away delightful hours over the pages of some all-story magazine, or some best seller of the moment; a thing which even in his leisure moments he dare not now do—or even allow it to be suspected that he would like to do, consummate hypocrite that he is compelled to be—except when rare opportunity makes it possible for him to give free reign to his actual taste in reading, behind doors locked or barred!

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ORAL READING IN ITS RELATION TO THE STUDY OF LITERATURE

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I begin with a truism. But since even the thing we call originality can consist only of little bundles of assorted truisms, I make no apology for my lack of it in saying that no work of literature can be wholly printed. The real message of the sermon can only be spoken; the eloquence of the oration does not exist on the printed page; the drama is speech; and the melody of poetry is called into being only by the living voice. The written word is a dead symbol that only the power of oral expression can give reality and life. Hence, the highest literature always implies vocal expression; and it is hardly too much to say that vocal interpretation is the necessary climax of any true study of any work of literature.

In considering the value of oral reading in the classroom study of a piece of literature, therefore, one is tempted to go far and to say that it is not valuable at all; it is invaluable. Indeed, one may go farther and ask, How is it possible to teach a piece of literature without oral reading—and a great deal of it? How is it possible that not only the climax, but much of the beginning and continuation of such study, should not be principally an effort to awaken vocally the thought and feeling that lie dormant on the printed page? Minute and careful elucidation of more or less obscure references may have an informational value; painstaking examination of human motive and consequence may nourish a budding analytical faculty; assiduous attention to rhetorical excellences and deficiencies may develop a critical attitude of mind; but since the purpose of the study of literature is culture rather than information, and appreciation rather than criticism, the desired result is not to be obtained by any such methods as these. Indeed, the result of any attempt to teach literature with

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a minimum of oral reading can be only a minimum of success. The young student of literature should not be trained to be the critical scientist, looking coldly on from the outside; and literary surgical processes of dissection are not the best means of revealing the great truths of literature. Literature is art, not science; and as an art it must be translated. Vocal interpretation is also an art, not a science, and is the best proof that the interpreter has identified himself with the truth. In the endeavor to voice the thoughts, the emotions of the masterpiece, it becomes clear whether the truth has entered into his being. Oral reading is the revelation of the reader. The touch given to certain words; the grouping of words in thought-phrases; the pause; the modulations of tone expressing—or struggling to express—one emotion or another, will be the measure of his understanding and appreciation. How he thinks the thought; his realization of the idea; the response awakened in him—all will be manifest in his manner of pronouncing the words. His utterance is a language in itself, personal, subjective, emotional, free, spontaneous.

But, unfortunately, there is too often painful proof that no such sympathetic relation has been established between the reader and the thing read. The schoolroom offers no more nerve-racking performance than that of the student laboring dully and monotonously to read a passage that conveys to him no thought-message and awakens in him no spark of sympathetic emotion. It is a desecration of a noble work of art. The temptation of the teacher at such trying times is to assume the office of reader. It is a good thing to do, and a thing that the teacher of literature should be amply qualified to do. The ability to read effectively, to read with sympathy, earnestness, and seriousness, is a valuable and necessary asset of one who deals with classics. The teacher of English who is master of the principles and practice of the best pedagogy, but who lacks the ability to read well, can no more be a wholly good teacher of literature than a fine, sympathetic reader whose pedagogy is more or less at loose ends can be a wholly bad one. There is inspiration for the dullest class in the reading that is natural and forcible because it is in harmony with the truth. It stimulates thought, stirs emotion, quickens imagination, and

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is a revelation of things hitherto unknown and undreamed of. It meets the response of an unawakened admiration and new valuation of the particular piece of literature under consideration. It is, in short, a pleasant and easy way to present a classic and to effect certain results. But the limit of its usefulness is soon reached; and, since it suggests but does not develop, it is not the best way to achieve the highest good of the student. Objective methods can do little toward transforming a bad reader into a good one. Imitation at best is the poorest and least intelligent of arts. It seizes accidentals and utterly ignores all that is fundamental; and oral reading developed by attention to accidentals can only be superficial, artificial, and unnatural. Imitation is not expression; it is mere sight at second hand and a poor substitute for the reader's own vision. Expression is subjective. Oral reading is from within, not without; and improvement in reading is an indication that some vital thought process has begun. Mechanical rules are a hindrance to both thought and feeling; and artificial helps can never supply the want of personal realization of a passage. Indeed, so dependent is good reading upon good thinking that oral reading is, in a sense, a process of thinking aloud.

The first test of good reading is simple truthfulness. Is it genuine? Is it natural? For fine reading is as bad as fine writing, if not worse. And the first step toward good reading is careful preparation of the passage to be read. There is no such thing possible as reading at sight. The most finished professional reader would not risk his reputation by appearing before an audience without thorough preparation. How manifestly absurd, then, to require a young student to feel his way through an unknown passage and to interpret vocally a thought that he has had no opportunity to grasp. Intelligent interpretation must be preceded by meditation; the passage to be read must be studied before it can be voiced. The effect of this close attention will be that the mind, concentrated upon a central idea, will gather into a group the words belonging to that idea; and the further result will be the utterance of thought-phrases, instead of the monotonous, disconnected string of words that characterizes poor reading. Not less important than this thought-phrasing, and growing out

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of it, is pause, one of the supreme difficulties in reading. That pause is not a mere mechanical halt of the voice, determined by the end of the line in poetry, by punctuation, or the mechanism of grammar or rhetoric; that its purpose is anything more than a much-needed opportunity to breathe, is not always clear to the young reader. The idea of pause as a necessary part of the thought, as an accentuation of the thought, as a silence filled with significance, as a time to reflect upon what is past and to prepare for what is to come, must be a gradual realization; but when the poorest reader comes to realize the value and significance of pause, there cannot fail to be a marked improvement in his reading. The same insight that develops phrasing and pause will develop emphasis, the location of the center of the idea, along with them. These things are not independent; they are parts of what may be called the unity of expression. Correctly placed emphasis reveals not only a command of the words, but control of feeling and concentration of thought as well. Its alternation with pause is the direct effect of a rhythmic action of the mind in thinking; and in proportion as thinking is genuine and expression natural will be the regular rhythmic alternation of pause and touch in reading. Such things as these are fundamental, and it is only by the accentuating of fundamentals that naturalness and power can be acquired. It is the business of the teacher to distinguish and develop what is primary and essential so that improvement may be real and permanent rather than apparent and fleeting. It is unnecessary to add that careful pronunciation and enunciation must be constantly insisted upon.

This much, then, should be the business of the teacher of English. Anything more technical, any drill must belong to the regular class in oral expression. And right here, may I make bold to say that oral expression classes seem not infrequently to present a sort of paradox? Is it not more often than otherwise the student who already reads with intelligence who elects to perfect himself in vocal interpretation? And should not these classes be designed primarily for those to whom oral expression does not come readily? I am merely inquiring. A required course of two hours of oral expression throughout the first year of

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high-school work would undoubtedly prove of inestimable value to the work of the English classroom.

Is it, then, intended to suggest that the oral reading of a classic should wholly supersede question and discussion? By no means. These things are undoubtedly the best of preparation for the oral interpretation to follow. The skilful questioning of the teacher clarifies thought and prepares the way for intelligent reading; but in proportion as reading becomes more and more intelligent will the necessity for a certain kind of questioning be less and less. Moreover, the conversational freedom and spontaneity of classroom discussion are a distinct help toward the attainment of ease and naturalness in reading. The trouble with most reading is that it dissociates itself entirely from any relation with conversation, whereas it is precisely the same spontaneous thinking that makes both intelligent. Neither is it intended to suggest that many of the longer classics can be read orally in the classroom in their entirety. Assignments should be definite. Students should know that they will be required to express vocally any one of a certain number of passages; or specific passages may be assigned to certain students; or a student may be permitted to make his own choice of a passage because of some quality in it that particularly appeals to him and prompts him to utterance. But whatever the plan pursued, there must be insistence on careful preparation, and every student must from time to time have opportunity to read. By following some such plan, real interest is stimulated in the act itself, and a certain pride of utterance springs into being. The oral reading of a classic should become a joy; if it does not, one may be almost certain that the classic itself gives no joy.

Some of us recall Dr. Spaeth's story of the Princeton freshman who, when asked what he understood by a classic, replied that a classic is a piece of literature written in a dead language. The answer is not without suggestion. Greek and Latin are not always the dead languages. It is safe to say that any classic studied without the vocal interpretation that is the final test of all literary appreciation must become to the young student a piece of literature written in a dead language.

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AN ATTEMPT TO MAKE ORAL COMPOSITION EFFECTIVE

MARY ETHEL COURTENAY
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In these days of purposeful education—of manual training, household arts, domestic science, and vocational courses—perhaps no subject in our high-school curriculum is of more practical value to the individual student than oral composition. This is one study for which the teacher has little difficulty in creating the situation or discovering a purpose: it forms an inherent part of the pupil's whole routine of work and play, for every class hour of the week and every outside interest and activity calls for the oral expression of self and the verbal communication of his ideas to another. Whether he be on the playground, in the classroom, at the club, in his home, in the shop, or in the office, he must know how to deal effectively with his fellows through the medium of speech. Whether our boys be preparing to plead cases in our law courts, to preach from our pulpits, to practice medicine, to deal in real estate, to sell goods over the counter, or to nominate a presidential candidate at a political convention, they must know how to speak. Whether our girls be expecting to teach in our schools, to occupy positions in offices, to sell hats and dress goods, or to take their place in the home and in society, they must know how to speak. And yet for years we have placed the stress of our teaching and exhausted the surplus of our strength upon the written theme, while we have somehow imagined that "just speaking" would take care of itself. Since "just speaking" forms so large a part of our lives, it would seem that it should form an important part of our school curriculum.

This eminently practical mission of oral composition must form the basis of the method of instruction. The first thing of which the student needs to be made conscious is the objective nature of the work. He is immediately concerned with something outside

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of himself, a group of listeners, and the ultimate success of his speech depends upon how effectively he reaches them in whatever way he proposes. If he fails to make his listeners *understand* the thing which he is trying to explain to them, *feel* the thing which he is endeavoring to impress upon them, *believe* the thing of which he is attempting to convince them, *do* the thing of which he is anxious to persuade them, or *enjoy* the story or experience by which he hopes to entertain them, he has failed to *accomplish his purpose*, and his composition is not effective, however clear and logical his sentences, or however eloquent his diction.

By setting up a definite aim, we establish at once a standard of judgment and a working basis of criticism. The members of the class can readily determine to what extent the speaker has accomplished his purpose, and they are quick to point out that which was not made clear, to protest against that which did not convince or persuade them, and to condemn that which failed to impress or to entertain. Here lies one of the teacher's greatest aids in securing the best results. Johnny may regard a "dignified presence" and "good form" with secret contempt, and hold "a careful choice of words" as a pedantic and pedagogical peculiarity; but he is immediately impressed by the open condemnation of his classmates, and the fact that they are observing his awkwardness, that they pick out with merciless scrutiny the flaws in his logic, and brand his speech as "stupid" and "no good," fires his ambition in a way that the instructor's criticisms and suggestions never can. He may submit to maturer judgment, and respectfully accept the statement of one with authority that his speech lacks force or his explanation is not clear; but these same facts assume an added reality and pointedness when his friend in the back row frankly declares, "The speaker didn't seem to care whether we got what he said or not, and I didn't get half of it"; or when he confronts a sea of waving hands and a storm of protests and demands, as, "I don't know what electroplating means," and "What is a galvanic cell?"

This direct dealing with his fellow classmates forces upon the attention of the pupil the most important psychological principle in the whole field of effective speaking—the necessity of coming within the experience of his listeners, of selecting and organizing

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his material with specific reference to his audience. The boy who attempts to explain the working of a mechanical device with which the girls of the class are not acquainted is at once confronted with the need of comparing the unknown to the known, of interpreting the new in terms of the familiar. Likewise the girl wishing to make felt the need for better equipment in the domestic science department, or endeavoring to excite enthusiasm over the organization of a new literary circle, may be made to feel the importance of selecting those facts which will most appeal to her audience and those methods of presentation which will impress them most strongly.

A situation arising out of the student's own experience, calling for the application of these principles of composition, and affording him an opportunity to measure his results, is an invaluable exercise. Last spring an enterprising lad in our school, who was enthusiastic over the establishment of a school paper, went round from room to room endeavoring to secure regular subscribers by urging the need of support and appealing to school spirit. The result was the usual response to the call of duty: the subscription blank which had been placed upon the bulletin board hung there, blankly expectant, for several days. Then one morning in the composition class I inquired as to the success of the new project. Our former enthusiast was frankly discouraged, and cited his fruitless efforts as evidence of the fact that the school was lacking in spirit and progressiveness. An examination of his method of appeal, however, led the class to a very different conclusion. As one boy aptly put it, "The speaker said a great deal about the paper needing us, but he didn't say a word about our needing the paper. It seems to me if I was going to buy a thing I'd want to know what I was going to get out of it." A little consideration showed that there was not a pupil in the school for whom the paper—with its official bulletins, its class news, its original productions, its reports of student activities and social functions, its personal column, its gossip, its jokes—had not some special interest. By the time our discussion was over, the discouraged promoter had taken heart and was ready to begin his labors anew, and before a week had passed his subscription list was growing with an encouraging rapidity.

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The complex life of a large high school is constantly offering such opportunities for practical exercises in oral composition. The vocational courses suggest the possibility of canvassing, demonstrating, interviewing, and selling. The science laboratories, with their work of investigating, testing, and proving, open up an interesting field of exposition. Student activities, mass-meetings, and public functions call for announcing, organizing, and presiding officials; and there are always the special occasions of contests and entertainments, with their chances of competition and exhibition for the ambitious.

A college professor recently said, "Give a boy a good training in oral composition and you have given him a liberal education." Surely it is a comprehensive study. It involves the collection of material for a given purpose, the selection of that which is most effective with relation to a definite situation and a particular audience, and its organization into a unified, logical, and effective whole. Does not all this demand training in keen observation, clear thinking, and sound judgment—practical virtues which the public have long deposited in the credit column of the sciences?

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EDITORIAL

THE TIME FOR ACTION

The final report of the Committee on English Composition Teaching to the National Council of Teachers of English and the Central Division of the Modern Language Association will soon be ready, and a partial summary of it appears in this number of the *Journal*. After its presentation, action upon the facts presented, if action be taken, will devolve upon English teachers themselves, through the organizations represented by the committee.

The report shows conclusively why present composition teaching in general lacks efficiency, and what conditions are necessary to bring that efficiency up to a reasonable standard. Toward the securing of those conditions the first and essential step is to obtain for the committee report complete publicity, so complete that no educator in the United States can remain in ignorance of the facts established. The committee seeks to obtain that publicity through the agency of either the United States Department of Education or the Carnegie Foundation. If for any reason this cannot be done, it will be necessary for teachers' organizations to take further action toward the same end, either directly or perhaps through educational publishers; and the general question of ways and means will be brought before the organizations named, at their approaching meetings in November and December.

After publicity, individuals and local organizations will be in a position to work for such improvement of local conditions as is possible, with hope for some degree of success. Thereupon a further duty will remain to be performed by the more fortunate ones; that of making accurate record and report of the new conditions and of the results that follow. The work of the committee is but a single step in the new movement, which seems to be world-wide—the movement to test and measure and compare and determine, wherever possible and within reasonable limits, the actual value in results of all educational processes. But in order that

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tests and measurements shall be of final authority, they should be made according to sound general principles to be agreed upon beforehand and carefully followed by all individual investigators. With reference to English composition teaching, it is of immediate importance that such principles should be formulated for the scientific study of oral training, to determine the proper proportion of oral to written work under varying conditions, and to test the relative efficiency of various methods of meeting those conditions. Particularly should be known in every instance, and with the utmost possible accuracy, the time required of the teacher for each pupil and the time required of each pupil for each method, since this fixes the cost of each method, and the cost determines its general availability. Steps to this end also may well be taken by the National Council at its next meeting.

ARTICLES ON ELEMENTARY ENGLISH

The editors of the *English Journal* are sometimes asked whether articles on English in the elementary schools are acceptable. Yes, by all means, if they are good. The one department of education in which everybody is interested and supremely interested is precisely that of the linguistic and literary training of children. Without a sound foundation of good habits of speech, of written expression, and of reading, a superstructure of broad culture and efficiency is impossible. For this reason every reader of the *Journal* would welcome discussion and reporting of experience and investigation with regard to English in the early years. Who will be the first to contribute?

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THE ROUND TABLE

THE FORTHCOMING REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ENGLISH COMPOSITION TEACHING

The final report of the Committee on English Composition Teaching will soon be ready; but at the date when the November *Journal* must go to press the tabulations are unfinished, and such as are completed await verification. To obtain information upon the points now under investigation, the relative labor and cost of teaching all secondary-school subjects, has proved very difficult, and has required two years in addition to the year spent in preparing the preliminary report of April, 1911. Final results are based upon the published reports of State Departments of Education, upon replies received to the 10,000 question blanks sent out by the committee, and upon an exhaustive investigation of the secondary schools in certain states carried on by state agencies working in co-operation with the committee. About 2 per cent of the question blanks brought replies from about 200 schools in twenty-three states, averaging thirteen teachers each; but a greater number of schools have been reached by other means, and will be included in the final figures. The geographical distribution of these schools is almost the same as that of those reported in the preliminary investigation; the greatest number are in the Central states, the next largest in the Eastern states, while from the South and the extreme West the returns are slight or altogether lacking. The committee is indebted for assistance to state educational officers, high-school visitors and other college officers, teachers' associations, and many individual volunteers.

In view of the fact that the work is incomplete and all figures as yet tentative, although exceedingly significant, it seems best to confine present statements to a few items, and to speak of these in general terms; specific details will be given at the meeting of the National Council. In general, all the published preliminary statements of the committee are confirmed by additional data. The relative teaching cost of English in proportion to the number of pupils is apparently less than that of any other subject taught in secondary schools; in any event, it is among the least in cost, the average remaining, as formerly stated, a little above seven dollars a year for each pupil. Mathematics costs a little more than English; history a little less than mathematics; German and Latin

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perhaps a third more; and scientific and vocational subjects cost from 50 to 100 per cent more. The point of this comparison lies, of course, in the fact that English composition is a vocational and laboratory subject, and that, for efficiency, it requires at least as much of investment as any other such subject in proportion to the number of pupils that take it, while actually having very much less than any other.

An indication of the relative total enrolment in certain subjects is afforded by the following figures, showing the average enrolment in each subject, omitting fractions, in 100 schools: English 332, Latin 120, German 93, mathematics 262, history 166, all scientific subjects 145, all vocational subjects 240. These proportions are substantially the same as those based upon previous tabulations of other data. For the same 100 schools, the average number of pupils assigned to a single instructor is: English 132, Latin 100, German 101, mathematics 115, history 121, all science subjects 98, all vocational subjects 101. The close and sometimes exact agreement of these figures with earlier ones indicates the substantial accuracy of all.

The tabulating of data concerning the relative labor demand of the various secondary-school subjects proves to be a very intricate matter; and all that can be said of results thus far worked out is that English makes the heaviest demand upon the time of teachers, and that science is apparently next; but that there is nothing in any other subject to parallel, in either time demand or physical strain, the theme reading of the English teacher. In this connection it may be recalled that the preliminary report of the committee has shown that, even when giving more time to their work than any other teachers do, English teachers can not do one-half what they know to be necessary to the maintenance of efficiency.

Other data of the present investigation relate to the cost of equipment of secondary-school subjects, and to the preparation of teachers. These are all in the hands of Professor V. C. Coulter, to be reported upon by him at the meeting of the Council.

The committee has not, as a committee, made any recommendations as to action to be taken in view of the facts established, though often requested to do so, beyond advising that steps be taken to secure complete publicity for its report. This is still necessarily the first step to be taken; and, after that, further action will depend upon whether general opinion prefers to let English drop from its position of central importance, or to have it established in that position. If the latter, a definite question must at once be answered—the question of what further

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equipment is necessary. It may be well to recall that the preliminary report of the committee answers that question more definitely and conclusively than has been noted by some who have accepted and discussed the report. Many of these have suggested placing greater stress on oral training as a means of solving the problem; perhaps not observing that the point is specifically included in the report. In substance, the thousand teachers represented in that report say that, broadly speaking, training in expression should, for complete efficiency, be half written and half oral; they fix a minimum amount for the written work, and show that with it there must be liberal opportunity for private conference between instructor and students. Estimates are made of the teaching time necessary to meet all these demands, and definite conclusions are reached and stated, these conclusions taking full account of the part that oral training should play in the general plan. Further, the evidence of the thousand teachers is that even if written training—theme writing—could be altogether dispensed with, efficient oral training would require an equal or slightly greater amount of teaching time—of course, without the physical strain of theme reading. Few discussions of oral training have concerned themselves at all with the time and labor measurements of the methods recommended, and those that have done so are in general agreement with the conclusions stated by the committee, with only such variations as are inevitable in individual cases.

But there is ample opportunity and necessity for further experiment, measure, test, and report by all who find their conditions sufficiently fortunate. Under present average conditions it is difficult to make really effective use of oral training because of the impossibility of giving individual pupils enough practice. The need of it may therefore be emphasized as one means of obtaining better conditions; and then all who find themselves able to do successful work in this way should accurately measure the time demand of their method or methods, should test and measure the relative value of the results, and should make full report, as a contribution to a new body of data. From these the conclusions of the committee may be corrected, if correction is necessary, and final answer made to the question, how to secure the greatest efficiency at the least expense in teaching English expression. An organized effort to this end might be made under the supervision of a special Council committee. Meanwhile, the Council may aid individual teachers everywhere to bring the facts established by the report to the attention of those who especially need to know them.

EDWIN M. HOPKINS

LAWRENCE, KANSAS
October 17, 1912

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OF GENERALITIES IN CRITICISM

The close student of current criticism may have noticed a certain generalizing tendency among some of our literary thinkers. Perhaps some of us will recall a recent sixty-page essay on Henry James containing the citation of not as much as a single paragraph from his writings. To others, the following may be reminiscent of a type:

> It would indeed be hardly too fanciful to find Emerson's philosophy very considerably derived from the natural man in him—using the terms in the "orthodox" theological sense, and not in his nor in Rousseau's. Bland angel as he was, he very much wanted his own way. One is tempted to say he invented his philosophy in order to get it. At all events, it suited him. He had no sentimental needs. It satisfies none. He had to an inordinate degree—

But why quote more? The *genre* is doubtless recognized.

With such neglect of what Saintsbury terms "the extant written word, the sole basis of sound criticism," it is refreshing to contrast some of Stedman's essays of a quarter-century ago—for example, his masterly chapter on "Tennyson and Theocritus" and his brief sketch of Rossetti. Here ample quotation at a sacrifice, neither of form nor of brevity, proves the critic's case.

It is not the present purpose to condemn generalization as necessarily unsound, but merely to inquire into the safety and perspicuity of its methods.

Both skilled and unskilled readers of criticism have the right to exact reasons for any literary appraisement. The school of writers that admires Hawthorne for his fantasy, De Quincey for his technique, George Eliot for her analysis, and Shakespeare for everything, should be compelled to offer a few original examples in support of the generalization, or at least to mitigate its triteness. If the critic's dictum is obviously true, it marks time and its omission would not be a loss; if otherwise, accuracy and fairness require that proofs be adduced. Critical estimates are to be valued according to the grounds upon which they are based. A very recent example will illustrate this. One of our leading treatises on English literature contains the sweeping assertion that Matthew Arnold "may be described as the poet of transition." To establish this general proposition, three poems are named and two lines are quoted. Generalities more or less glittering compose the rest of the two pages in which the thesis is developed. Professor Vernon P. Squires, a later and closer critic, has demonstrated the weakness of this position chiefly by citing and analyzing an overwhelming array of passages that

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reflect the poet's ultimate if not unwavering optimism. His argument is tacitly founded on the correct assumption that if a poet's spiritual tone is on the whole cheerful, he should not be damned as "a poet of dejection" for a few occasional falterings. Even Tennyson had his passing doubts.

If the lack of particulars is a drawback regardless of the reader's training, how much more so is it when the audience, though tolerably well-read, is untaught in the ways of criticism. This portion of the reading public is considerable, and is entitled to its share of expert literary valuation. Indeed, it is for this class that the discipline of criticism is most necessary. The laity cannot understand or appreciate a critique, however, unless its basis is clearly outlined. Processes as well as results should be given, if the periods of abstract, scintillating rhetoric are not to remain unintelligible save to those who need them least. Literary exposition would have more readers if it spoke in a simplified language. Close dependence upon text is one of the surest means of simplification.

It may be replied that this branch of literature is intended, after all, for the elect; and that, however diluted, it must always remain caviar. But those who urge this argument can hardly have in mind the noblest aim of criticism—that of shaping taste, elect and otherwise, along lofty and wholesome lines. Shorn of such aim, it were a mere pyrotechnic exhibition among school-men, a giving to those who have.

GILBERT COSULICH

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NEWS AND NOTES

PROGRAM OF THE SECOND ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL

Arrangements for the meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English in Chicago, November 29 and 30, are nearing completion. Headquarters have been reserved at the Auditorium Hotel, Michigan Avenue and Congress Street, and all the sessions will be held there. The principal audience room will seat 800, and it is confidently believed that this will be filled on Friday and Saturday mornings. The indications point to a very large enrolment.

More than 40 speakers are named in the program. Since each subscriber to the *Journal* will probably receive a copy of the first edition of it before this account can reach him, it is unnecessary to print it in full in this connection. Hence only a résumé is given.

The Board of Directors will meet Thursday evening at 8 o'clock. The first general session opens at 9:30 Friday morning with President Scott's address, which will be followed by the appointment of committees and by Mr. Noyes' report on "Articulation," Mr. Hosic's on "Types of High-School Courses," and Miss Buck's on "Plans for Undertaking a Revision of Grammatical Terminology." The sections meet at 2 o'clock Friday afternoon. The Elementary Section will consider grammar and composition, the chief speakers being James H. Harris of Dubuque, Iowa, Walter Barnes of Glenville, West Va., Isabel McKinney of Charleston, Ill., and Lemuel R. Brown of Cleveland, Ohio. The Secondary Section will consider Mr. Bates' report on a list of books for home reading and the following: "Modern Literature in the High School," presented by Mary D. Spalding of St. Louis; "A Loose-Leaf Textbook in English Literature," by Caroline E. Britten of Jackson, Mich.; "Dramatic Work," by Allan Abbott of Horace Mann School; and "Business English," by Marion Lyons of Chicago. The College Section provides two topics—"Oral English" and "Preparation of Instructors." Professor Clapp of Lake Forest will read a paper on the former and the discussion of the latter will be opened by Professor Greenough of Harvard University. He will be followed by Dr. Manley of the University of Chicago, Dr. Alden of Illinois University, Dr. Lewis of Lewis Institute, Pro-

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fessor Spencer of Lawrence College, Professor Mims of Vanderbilt University, and others. The meeting of the Normal Section will open with a report by Dr. Blount of Ypsilanti, Mich., on "What English Work Is Required by the Normal Schools of High-School Graduates Preparing to Teach in the Elementary Schools." Her statement will be followed by a general discussion led by Dr. Owen of Chicago, Mr. Hinch of Cheney, Wash., Mr. Pittenger of Indiana University, and Mr. Lynch of Iowa State Teachers College. Public Speaking will be presented as follows: "The High-School Course," Paul M. Pearson, Swarthmore, Pa., and Bessie Camburn of Mt. Clemens, Mich.; "Relation of the High-School Course in Public Speaking to the Other English Studies," C. R. Rounds, Milwaukee; "Relation of the College Course in Public Speaking to the Other English Studies," S. H. Clark, the University of Chicago; "An Oral English Test for Entrance to College," Elvira D. Cabell, Chicago Teachers College.

The annual dinner will occupy the evening of Friday. The program will consist of an address by a prominent educator or of a series of toasts. The closing session on Saturday, beginning at 9 o'clock, will be occupied with business, the reports of Professor Hopkins on "Labor and Cost of Composition Teaching" and of Professor Coulter on "Equipment," and a paper on "Sorting College Freshmen" by Professor Boynton of the University of Chicago.

The members of the Council will certainly do all in their power to extend the notice of this excellent program. Teachers of English can well forego many other pleasures and opportunities for the sake of being in Chicago at the Council Meeting. Let every loyal brother do his duty.

THE ARTICULATION OF THE ELEMENTARY AND HIGH-SCHOOL COURSES IN ENGLISH

In the belief that the transition from the elementary school to the high school is often needlessly difficult, the National Council of Teachers of English has recently appointed a committee on the articulation of the elementary and high-school courses in English. The investigation conducted by this committee is not directed primarily toward the interests of either school alone, but aims at a better adjustment between the two. Its purpose is to discover just what courses in English are best suited to the needs of the child in each stage of his development.

All high-school teachers of English, teachers in elementary schools,

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principals, and supervising officers are earnestly requested to give the committee the favor of their assistance by answering as definitely as possible the following questions. If you are willing to help, get others to aid you in supplying the information without which the committee cannot do its work. If you cannot follow the questions in detail, will you not send a letter giving freely all the information at your command, together with your opinions on the subject? Copies of the questions will be sent upon request. Address the member of the committee nearest you.

QUESTIONS

(All answers are presumed to apply to the school system with which the writer is connected.)

Printed courses of study will be gratefully received.

I. A. What does the course of study in English for the three years immediately preceding the high school include under: (1) Composition (*a*) oral, (*b*) written; (2) Reading and literature. Name the classics studied. (3) Grammar or language?

B. What does the first year of the high-school course include under the heads above?

C. Is either course ill adapted to the needs of pupils for whom it is intended?

D. To what extent have college-entrance requirements influenced the high-school course in the first year? Above the first year?

II. Is the articulation between the courses of the two schools satisfactory or unsatisfactory?

III. If articulation is unsatisfactory, is the defective joining of the two courses noticeable in: (*a*) Reading and interpretation of literature? (*b*) Oral and written expression? (*c*) Grammar? (*d*) General mental habits? (*e*) Other respects?

IV. Is such imperfect adjustment the result of: (*a*) Defects in the curriculum or the methods of the elementary school? (*b*) Unreasonable demands on the part of the high school? (*c*) Differences in methods of teaching in the two schools? (*d*) Unnecessary repetition of work due to a lack of correlation of the two courses? Please state specifically just what work is repeated under each head. (*e*) Any other cause?

V. A. What value should you assign to any of the following as remedies for imperfect articulation: (1) Assignment of the most experienced high-school teachers to first year classes? (2) Departmental teaching in the elementary school?

B. Have you any suggestions for increasing co-operation between the teachers of the two schools?

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C. Can you offer any other plans for making the transition from the elementary course in English to the high-school course less difficult?

VI. For the best interests of pupils at each period of their progress, (*a*) Just what literary classics should be taught in the elementary school? What in the first year of the high school? (*b*) What ground in grammar should be covered in each school? In what year of the high-school course should grammar be studied, and why? (*c*) What should be done in each school in composition, oral and written? (*d*) Which of the divisions of English mentioned above should receive the most emphasis in each school? (*e*) What differences in methods of instruction in English, if any, should be observed in the two schools? (*f*) Can you name any other ways in which the course in English in either school should be supplemented or modified in the interests of the pupils?

VII. Have the courses of the elementary and high schools been constructed and correlated under the supervision of one person or group of persons, or have they been framed quite independently?

VIII. Any additional information or opinions bearing on the problem of articulation will be heartily welcomed by the committee.

Sarah J. McNary, State Normal School, Trenton, N.J.
Theodore C. Mitchill, Jamaica High School, New York.
J. W. Searson, State Agricultural College, Manhattan, Kan.
James B. Smiley, Lincoln High School, Cleveland, Ohio.
Ernest C. Noyes, *Chairman*, Fifth Avenue High School, Pittsburgh, Pa. *Committee*

ORGANIZATION OF HIGH-SCHOOL ENGLISH

The National Council committee on the high-school course has prepared a circular which includes a letter to principals, a tabular form to be filled in, and the following questions:

1. How many pupils recite English daily? Length of periods?
2. Number of teachers full time? Number part time? What else do the latter teach?
3. How do you test the efficiency of your English course?
4. What is the chief obstacle to complete success?
5. Do composition, grammar, literature, and oral expression constitute a single course? With no division of credits? If not, please explain your plan.
6. In what way and to what extent is the work in composition (including rhetoric) correlated with the study of literature and the history of literature?
7. What proportion of the assignments in composition are based upon the pupil's knowledge and experience apart from his reading?
8. How are oral composition and the writing of themes related?

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9. What provision is made for oral reading, public speaking, training in pronunciation, etc.?

10. Is student criticism of written work employed? How?

11. Do teachers keep conference hours? Have you a "laboratory" plan? What is it?

12. If you have a school paper please send sample copies. How is it conducted? Do you provide any other similar opportunities for practical experience?

13. What work in English grammar do you require?

14. How are the grammar studies related to the pupils' compositions?

15. What work in spelling, punctuation, and other mechanics of writing do you require?

16. What is your basis of (*a*) choice and (*b*) arrangement of classics?

17. What use do you make of the Uniform (or other) College-Entrance Requirements?

18. What study of the history of literature (*a*) American, (*b*) English, do you require?

19. How do you teach mythology?

20. How do you direct the reading of modern and current literature (books and periodicals)?

21. How and for what purposes do you employ dramatization and the art of acting? Literary clubs? The school library?

22. How do you secure satisfactory co-operation on the part of teachers of other subjects?

23. In what way is your course determined by your local conditions?

24. Please add other suggestions which would aid the committee. The committee would like information as to new courses, experiments, elective classes, adaptation to local conditions, etc. Send material to the *English Journal*.

THE CHICAGO ENGLISH CLUB

The October meeting of the Chicago English Club occurred Saturday, October 12, 1912, at the Chicago Public Library. Miss Elvira D. Cabell, president, called attention to the club as one peculiarly fitted to be a strong factor in the progress of English at this, its crucial period, because through its membership of college, normal, and high-school teachers, principals, elementary teachers, and those merely interested in English, it can contribute an unusual breadth of experience to the discussion of problems, and because, in this club, speakers and audience alike come to get and also to give.

An especially interesting program endeavored to outline, by suggestions, the year's work of the club. Dr. William B. Owen, speaking

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on "The Measurement of Results in English," pointed out the organic nature of the study of language, the great instrument in the building up and refining of the child's character and in affording him independence. He explained that measurement of results merely points out places where we need to change our method of obtaining results and enables teachers to compare the work received and their grading of it. The difficulty in measurement, he said, comes because the new grading is endeavoring to represent judgments of aesthetic values instead of values of fact.

Miss Marion Lyons presented "The Argument for Business English." She asserted that Business English is in reality only simple English. It has come into the schools because of the tardy admission of the truth that there are children who need a different education from that provided by the academic course of study. In Business English the teacher has, at present, the advantage of no course of study to hamper him and freedom to consider the needs of the children. Their work is judged by business standards; so that careless work, poor spelling, etc., are felt by the pupil himself to be unworthy of his chosen calling. The main unit of composition is the business letter, desirable because of its brevity, the variety offered, the definite directions for its construction, the necessity for accurate judgment, imagination, and sympathy, the recognition of the value and use of tact and courtesy, the cultivation of a wide vocabulary and variety of phrasing.

Dr. Edwin Lewis treated his subject, "The Human Touch," in his usual whimsical and charming way, by making five points to correspond with the five fingers. They were: first, it is human to read the *English Journal* because it is that rare thing, a professional journal that is really human; second, it is human for an English teacher to realize his own imperfections; third, language is human, and no one perfectly certain about usage ought to be teaching English; fourth, it is human to make the drudgery of punctuation, spelling, etc., a pleasure by the introduction of humor; fifth, and greatest of all, a teacher must have a human understanding of his opportunity, that of the organization of personalities, the fight against the beginnings of the social evil, the keeping of young hearts clean, tender, and warm, the fostering of the love of home, the home instinct.

Miss Helen Zurawski, speaking on "The Future of Oral Expression," emphasized the difficulty of teaching reading, and advised a greater definiteness in aim and teaching.

Miss Nena Anderson, in presenting "Dramatics in the First Grade,"

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pointed out the fact that "spontaneous" dramatics cannot be taught until the little ones can think, can realize that they are playing a part.

Concluding the program, Mr. Hosic spoke of the general tendency toward organization of English teachers, of the prospective international commission of elementary, high-school, and college teachers of English and public speaking, and called attention to the coming convention of the National Council of English Teachers. He advocated the setting up of a few definite aims for such organizations, one of which was the improvement of conditions in schools and colleges, and another, the securing of more complete and accurate knowledge of the development of language and taste in children and youth.

The society voted to apply for membership in the National Council and to assist in perfecting arrangements for the Council meeting.

ALDA M. STEPHENS

FINAL REPORT OF A SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE NEW YORK HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS ASSOCIATION ON A COLLEGE-PREPARATORY COURSE IN ENGLISH FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

The problem.—To plan a course of study which will fit the diverse needs of those intending to go to college for the regular academic course, those who will spend one or two years at college and then enter law or medical schools, and those who will enter scientific or technical schools direct from high school.

The aim.—To plan a well-rounded curriculum, which in addition to intellectual training will give culture. This is the more necessary, as many students will go directly to technical schools, where professional training is the sole object of study. Courses in drawing, music, and art-appreciation are required, in addition to extended work in history and English.

A further aim is to provide a course of study elastic enough to give the brightest pupil all he can do, and yet to permit the dull one to go ahead, getting what he can. To this end, numerous electives are given. The lock-step of a rigid curriculum is deadening, both to the super-normal and the sub-normal type of pupil.

ENGLISH COURSE FOR PUPILS INTENDING TO ENTER COLLEGE OR PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL

Time allotment, five hours weekly, one of which is unprepared. This time is necessary because of the large foreign population in our city schools.

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First year.—The English classics to be mainly simple narratives in prose and verse. These not to be studied intensively. Much time given to reading aloud. Spelling to be studied systematically, though a whole period may not be necessary for it. Elocution for two terms; scientific training given in voice production. This applied in the reading of classics and in oral composition. Oral composition made as important as written throughout the course. In last half of year, spelling replaced by supplementary reading. Extended lists of books which young people actually like are provided, books to be obtained from the public library. Every pupil made a library user and taught the arrangement of books and the use of the card catalogue.

Second year.—Work in classics continued, but with an unprepared period, in which new matter may be read aloud by the teacher or the pupils. Grammar studied systematically. After a year's work in foreign language, English grammar can be taken up with much more profit. This is followed by rhetoric in the second half. The principles of grammar and rhetoric studied are applied in the composition work. Giving a definite place to these subjects, where they are studied continuously and grasped as a whole, seems preferable to scattering them through four years.

Third year.—Study of classics continued, with review in last half of books previously read. Supplementary reading, largely in periodicals. In first half, pupils taught to read the newspaper as current history, to compare various papers, to appreciate how political and business interests modify the news pages. Debating taken up, with subjects drawn chiefly from current events. In last half, magazines studied; pupils taught the distinctive characteristics of leading magazines, to know something of technical and trade journals; to read and report upon current articles in magazines.

Fourth year.—In first half, a brief history of English literature is studied. This should not be a bare outline but a connected account, confined, however, to authors who are read today, and emphasizing the nineteenth century. Supplementary reading here and in the next term to be done in connection with this study. In second half, classics required for study for college entrance are taken. A feature of the work of this year is the free period, to be used according to the needs of the class; for example, to train in public speaking, to work on thesis for graduation, or give individual instruction where it is needed.

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Subjects	First Year	Prepared	Unprepared	Second Year	Prepared	Unprepared	Third Year	Prepared	Unprepared	Fourth Year	Prepared	Unprepared
English	Classics	2	...	Classics	1	1	Classics	2	...	Hist. Lit. and Classics	2	...
	Spelling and Comp.	2	...	Grammar and Rhetoric	2	...	Sup. Read	1	...	Sup. Read	1	...
	Elocution	...	1	Composition	1	...	Composition	1	...	Composition	1	...
										Free period	...	1
Language—German, French, Latin or Greek	A foreign language	5	...	A foreign language	4	1	A foreign language	4	1	Elective 1	(4)	(1)
				Elective 2	(4)	...	Elective 2	(4)	...	Elective 2	(4)	...
History	...	...	...	Ancient	3	...	Med. and Mod.	(4)	...	Mod. Europe and Amer	(4)	...
Civics	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Local State and Nat. Gov'ts	3	...
Economics	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Economics	(4)	...
Mathematics	Business Arith	...	1	Plane Geometry	5	...	Elective 3	(4)	...	Elective 4	(4)	...
	Algebra	4	1									
Science	Biology	2	2	...	...	...	Physics	4	1	Elective 5	(3)	(2)
Manual Tr. or Domestic Science*	...	...	2	...	...	(2)	...	...	(2)	...	...	(2)
Art	Music	...	1	Music	...	1	Music	...	1	Music	...	1
				Drawing†	...	(2)	Elective	...	(2)	Elective	...	(2)
				Art Appreciation	...	...	Art Appreciation	...	1			
Physical Training	...	...	2	...	...	2	...	...	2	...	...	2

Elective 1—A fourth year of a language.
2—A second language to be pursued three years.
3—Trig. and Algebra beyond Quadratics.
4—Solid Geometry and Advanced Alg.
5—Chemistry, or Physiography, or Biology.

* In schools where these subjects are not taught at all, drawing would take their place in first year.

† Pupils not taking a second language in this year will elect either Manual Training, Domestic Science, or Drawing.

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OUTLINE BY TERMS

Brackets indicate unprepared periods.

First Term
- Classics 2
- Spelling 1
- Oral and Written Composition 1
- Elocution [1]

Second Term
- Classics 2
- Supplementary Reading 1
- Oral and Written Composition 1
- Elocution [1]

Third Term
- Classics 1 [1]
- Grammar 2
- Oral and Written Composition 1

Fourth Term
- Classics 1 [1]
- Rhetoric 2
- Oral and Written Composition 1

Fifth Term
- Classics 2 [1]
- Current Events 1
- Debating 1

Sixth Term
- Review Classics 2 [1]
- Magazines 1
- Oral and Written Composition 1

Seventh Term
- History English Literature 2
- Supplementary Reading 1
- Oral and Written Composition 1
- Free Period [1]

Eighth Term
- Classics 2
- Oral and Written Composition 1
- Supplementary Reading 1
- Free Period [1]

BENJAMIN A. HEYDRICK, *Chairman*
JOHN D. MINNICK
WILLIAM W. LAMB

A large number of meetings of teachers will be held during November and December. Many of these provide for strong English programs. At the English Round Table in Topeka, Percival Chubb, of the Ethical Society of St. Louis, will be the principal speaker. Special attention will be given to the elementary schools. The Iowa English teachers, at the state association meeting in Des Moines, will listen to John M. Clapp of Lake Forest College. At the Milwaukee gathering of the Wisconsin teachers, James F. Hosic of Chicago Teachers College will give two addresses. Professor E. L. Thorndike of Columbia University has been engaged for a conference by the Illinois Association of English Teachers, which will meet as usual at Urbana. Among the speakers before the College and High School section at Albuquerque will be John B. MacArthur of the State Agricultural College. At the New Haven-Hartford

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meeting, Charles H. Ward of the Taft School, Watertown, will conduct the round table. North Dakota English teachers are planning to organize under the leadership of Vernon P. Squires of the university.

The Journal of English Studies for September–January contains the following articles: "Tennyson and Quintus Calaber," by A. S. Way; "Bacon as Writer," by J. M. Robertson; "The Appreciation of Poetry," by P. B. Ballard; "The Poetry of James Stephens," by Katharine Tynan; "The Teaching of Poetry in Secondary Schools," by H. A. Treble; "English Literature in Schools," by the editor and E. Harwood Smith; and short articles and notes under the heads of "Teachers in Council," "Reports of Societies," and "Reviews." The article by Mr. Ballard is a very interesting study of children's tastes, and represents a kind of study of which there must be much before we shall have a rational basis for our English courses. The editor, Mr. C. L. Thomson, writes that the plans for his magazine were made before news of the *English Journal* reached him. This is one more indication of the fact that the time for better organization of English teaching had, indeed, arrived. It will be noted that the *Journal of English Studies* is devoted in part to critical studies.

To the Editor of the English Journal:

The use of a quotation from Arlo Bates in my article "Going Forth to the Philistines" was misleading. It read: "In learning to write, it is well to select uninteresting subjects." The context made it appear that I considered this equivalent to saying: "In *teaching*, it is well to *assign* uninteresting subjects." Certainly Professor Bates was not encouraging boredom and drudgery in compulsory rhetoric. He was directing self-cultivation in a group of writing learners. I regret the misrepresentation.

T. H. Guild

The October leaflet of the Illinois Association is devoted mainly to the address on "Amelioration of Conditions Surrounding the Teaching of Composition" which was delivered by Professor John M. Clapp, of Lake Forest College, before the Joint Conference on English at the National Education Association in July. The New England leaflet presents a very interesting "Contrast of Methods" by Christopher Robert Stapleton of the Wadleigh High School, New York.

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The following amendments to the constitution of the National Council of Teachers of English will be offered at the approaching annual meeting: (1) That on and after January 1, 1913, the name of the organization shall be the National English Council. (2) That the treasurer of the Council shall be a member of the Executive Committee. (3) That the fiscal year shall begin December 1.

Teachers of German have a very valuable periodical called *Aus Nah und Fern*, which issues from the press of the Francis W. Parker School in Chicago under the editorship of Arthur G. Merrill. Its chief purpose is to provide interesting supplementary reading for students of German.

The Houghton, Mifflin Co. is continuing the series of pamphlets for English teachers called "English Problems," under the editorial supervision of Charles S. Thomas. The latest number is by Professor W. A. Neilson, of Harvard University. It deals with college-entrance requirements.

Professor Fairchild, of the University of Missouri, kindly calls attention to the fact that the *Life of Shakespeare* in the "English Men of Letters" series was written by Raleigh, of Oxford, and not by Neilson, of Harvard.

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REVIEWS

INTEREST IN HIGH-SCHOOL ENGLISH

Dr. Edward Jones has here[1] recorded an attempt to find out, through carefully conducted investigations of several thousand school children, what qualities of literature appeal most strongly to young people. He has done more than merely make lists of books in the order of their popularity with pupils in the schools; he has, in addition, made judicious use of that little inquisitor, "Why?" To induce boys and girls to give the reasons for their literary preferences, to tabulate the facts, and to determine whether the deductions are in harmony with our pedagogical practices, are the tasks which he set himself; and the results are not always what the teacher of literature would have them. By their own testimony the pupils of our high schools rank *plot* as the highest degree of literary excellence. There is "a gradual decline in the intensity of this element, yet the introduction of selections strong in plot will force the interest upward." As interest in event loses its importance, there is more pleasurable recognition of moral qualities in human character, and, apparently, a tendency in the reader to imagine himself in the position of the heroes of fiction. *Silas Marner*, for example, is more liked for its ethical value by pupils of the third year than by those of the second year of high school, and should therefore be reserved for the later time, when it is more likely to be a factor of moral growth. The interest of young people is slow to shift itself from incident and character to matters of form, yet it rises gradually, from 4 per cent at the beginning of high-school life to 20 per cent at the beginning of the fourth year, at no time being as high as plot-interest at its lowest. "The force of figurative language of the *Idylls of the King* was quite unknown, and no one had heard the significant tones of *The Lady of the Lake*. The strength and dignity of the finest passages of Shakespeare made slight conscious impression, and Ruskin's paragraphs meant nothing." The technique of literature, in short, makes but feeble effect upon the mind of adolescence; and the author believes he has good reason for saying that what appreciation there is, is instinctive rather than the result of instruc-

[1] *Sources of Interest in High-School English.* By C. Edward Jones, Ph.D., Associate Superintendent of Schools, Albany, N.Y. New York: American Book Co., 1912. Pp. 144.

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tion. As to description, interest seems to be appreciable in the eighth and ninth years (in which description is a subject of study assigned by the New York syllabus), to fall off in the tenth year, and to rise again in the eleventh. The author concludes that the last rise is the normal one, and that at present the study of description comes too early. Home reading as well as that of the classroom receives the author's careful attention. As a whole, the book will be one of great interest to teachers of English; and those who are builders of courses of study cannot well neglect it.

A COMPOSITION BOOK FOR FRESHMEN

Here is a book[1] that for its brevity, its orderly arrangement, its rational treatment of the subject, and its beauty of binding and typography, may be praised in superlative terms. The teacher who delights to expatiate on the literary art rather than to give his students practice in the plain business of writing English for the ordinary purposes of life, will search in vain for the usual theoretical material that encumbers so many books of the kind; and the teacher who disapproves of this sort of thing will find the whole contents usable in the classroom and in the preparation of themes. The author begins with a treatment of the theme as a whole, and then proceeds to a consideration of the paragraph, the sentence, the word, and finally to punctuation. The second part deals with the four classes of composition—exposition, argumentation, description, and narration; but emphasis is laid upon the fact that this division is purely one for convenience in study, since a writer seldom deliberately sets himself the task of writing any one of these four forms as a thing of value in itself. The skill with which the author meets the difficulties which teachers and students have in performing their joint task with economy of time and labor, is worthy of high commendation. This is especially true of the part of the book that treats of the sentence. Under the five heads of arrangement, reference, co-ordination and subordination, ellipsis, and verb-forms, the solecisms upon which upper high-school pupils and college freshmen so frequently trip, are treated in such a manner as to bring practical results, if the instructor exercises even moderate intelligence in fixing habits in the minds of his students. It is difficult, indeed, to see how even the inexperienced teacher could go astray. In the treatment of words, too, the author is clear in his exposition and effective in his illustrations. Under the head of "Tone," for

[1] *The Essentials of English Composition.* By James Weber Linn, Associate Professor of English, University of Chicago. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912. Pp. 186.

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example, occurs the following: "Of two petitions recently presented to a college faculty, asking exemption from discipline, one ended 'Allow me this privilege, and I promise you that never again shall my young feet stray from the straight path of duty into the tangled and thorny thicket of evil-doing.' It was greeted by laughter, and disregarded. The other petition declared 'Like Jeffries at Reno, I find that when I buck the faculty I am up against a better man. If you will give me the benefit of the doubt this time I will never get into the ring with your respectable body again.' It shared the fate of the first. Both the aspiring authors had mistaken the proper tone." If there is any college freshman who cannot understand that, he ought to be sent back to the kindergarten; and if he cannot learn from it something of service in his own oral and written discourse, he has no right to be in a college class. Throughout, there is much that the experienced teacher will find verifiable from his own experience. In size, the volume is convenient; in binding and typography it is especially pleasing: it will fit into a boy's pocket and into a girl's conception of the beautiful. C. L. H.

BOOK NOTICES

[Mention under this head does not preclude review elsewhere.]

American Poems. By WALTER C. BRONSON. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1912. Pp. 669.

A volume corresponding in scope and treatment to the previous valuable series of anthologies of British poetry. The author had the good fortune to have access to rare collections of Americana, and hence offers unusually accurate texts of the early poems.

Questions on Shakespeare. By ALBERT H. TOLMAN. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Part I contains introductory matter, including a study of Shakespeare's language and verse and a general bibliography. Part II is devoted to the first histories, poems, and comedies. These two parts are cloth bound. The remaining parts so far issued are paper bound, each being devoted to a single play. These are as follows: *The Merchant of Venice*, *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, *As You Like It*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Tempest*, *Henry IV*, Parts I and II, and *Much Ado about Nothing*. The series when complete will embody the results of years of experience on the part of the author in teaching college classes and will provide an almost inexhaustible supply of suggestions for study of the great dramatist.

An Anthology of English Prose (1332–1740). By ANNIE BARNETT and LUCY DALE. Preface by ANDREW LANG. New York: Longmans, 1912. Pp. 247.

No apparatus is included except brief notes on the meaning of words and an index of authors. A succeeding volume will cover the period from 1741 to 1892.

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A History of American Literature. By WILLIAM B. CAIRNS. New York: Oxford University Press, 1912. Pp. 502.

Intercollegiate Debates, Vol. II. By EGBERT RAY NICHOLS. New York: Hinds, Noble, & Eldredge, 1912. Pp. 832. $2.00.

A yearbook of college debating, with records of questions and decisions, specimen speeches, and bibliographies.

Effective Speaking. By ARTHUR EDWARD PHILLIPS. Chicago: The Newton Co., 1911. Pp. 315. $1.50.

An exceedingly helpful volume. It deals with the problem of preparing speeches, not delivery.

The Applications of Logic. By A. T. ROBINSON. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1912. $1.20.

A textbook in which logic is applied to the critical study of prose and to argumentative composition. The work is the outgrowth of experience in teaching in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Thought-Building in Composition. By ROBERT WILSON NEAL. New York: Macmillan, 1912. Pp. 170.

A course in composition in which training in thinking is set up as the end of practice in expression, rather than mere mastery of forms.

Literary Composition. By SHERWIN CODY. Chicago: The School of English, 1912. Pp. 227.

A textbook embodying the ideas set forth in the author's article on "Scientific Principles in the Teaching of Composition," which appeared in the *English Journal* for March 1912. The method is essentially inductive, and involves the examination of specimens of various kinds of literary prose.

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A welcome addition to the Riverside Series. The introduction and notes contain much interesting information concerning the circumstances surrounding the author's work.

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Additions to the excellent Canterbury Classics, edited by Katherine Lee Bates.

Children's Classics in Dramatic Form, Book Five. By AUGUSTA STEVENSON. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1912.

Intended for the seventh and eighth grades and hence completes the series.

Everyday English, Book One. By FRANKLIN T. BAKER and ASHLEY H. THORNDIKE. New York: Macmillan, 1912. $0.35 net.

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Based upon the lists compiled and used by the Cleveland schools.

Miss Billy's Decision. By ELEANOR H. PORTER. Boston: L. C. Page & Co., $1.25 net.

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THE ENGLISH JOURNAL

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COLLEGE ENGLISH COMPOSITION[1]

JOHN W. CUNLIFFE
School of Journalism, Columbia University

I am glad to find the Club attracted to such a shop-worn subject as College English, in which I have been very much interested for some years past. It is only fair to warn you from the beginning that I did not choose this subject for your consideration because I have any new gospel to proclaim; I should seek rather to define my position as that of the hopeful learner. I have talked about it with a good many heads of English departments in various parts of the country, without, I confess, and I wish to say it in all respect, gaining much light from them. It seems as if God has hidden these things from the wise and prudent, as we must suppose all heads of departments to be; whether he has revealed them to—graduate students—remains to be seen; but as I have already suggested, I have hope and faith that some of the younger generation of teachers will make a new contribution toward a solution. If I can do nothing more, I should like to enlist your sympathies and stir your ambitions in connection with what I regard as the greatest unsolved problem in our educational tangle.

In the first place, let me say a word of warning as to what the problem is. It is not, in my opinion, an impossible task that we undertake when we try to teach the undergraduate to write. The aim that we put before ourselves and before them is not to make literary

[1] An address to the Graduate English Club of Columbia University, October 18, 1912.

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artists, to produce Paters and Stevensons and Merediths or even O. Henrys, but to enable the ordinary man to set forth such ideas as he has (or such facts as he needs to present) in an orderly and effective fashion, without mistakes in construction, grammar, punctuation, and spelling. The aim is a modest one—some will say a humble one—but I believe it is worthy of the best endeavor of any intelligent man who aspires to be a college teacher. This side of the English teacher's work both in school and college is too often confused with the teaching of literature, or contrasted with it as if the teaching of literature were of greater dignity. In certain institutions, under present conditions, the teacher of literature enjoys a position of greater comfort and prestige; that is perhaps the reason why the older teachers of English in almost all our colleges cling to literature with a desperate grip, and the younger men clutch at that part of the work eagerly, with both hands. I admit that it is an easier task to inspire young people with a love for great literature—especially if they have it already—and it is still less difficult to reduce literary research to a tedious compilation of insignificant facts. But I am not yet persuaded that the teaching of literature, even at its best, is a nobler endeavor than the teaching of composition. To teach composition well requires intelligence, sympathy, and a degree of vital energy not given to everyone. It makes greater demands upon personality, and in college teaching, personality is of more importance and of more value than knowledge. I should not be averse to extending that assertion to all teaching, but the more limited statement goes as far as is necessary for the purpose of the present inquiry.

One result of the higher esteem—as I believe, mistaken—in which the teacher of literature is sometimes held is that the teacher of composition strays from his appointed task to teach literature. It may be that the two are inseparable—that the best way of teaching writing is by means of what is already written. I have no quarrel with that method so long as the teacher keeps the aim of teaching how to write distinctly in view. If it is agreed that the best means of acquiring a vocabulary is to learn poetry, by all means let the student learn poetry. If he can best learn paragraph construction from the study of Dryden and Macaulay, by all means

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let him study Dryden and Macaulay. I am not a whit disturbed if the teacher tells the class that Dryden and Macaulay and the best English poets are worth study for their own sake. The student may "by indirection find direction out." But it does seem to me important that in composition courses the teacher should say *to himself*, "these young people are studying these authors in order to learn to write." The teacher, at least, should know what he is driving at, and should keep his aim continually in view if there is to be any hope of his attaining it. It is hardly necessary, I hope, for me to say that I hold no brief against the teaching of literature, the study of which has occupied most of my time and thought from my youth up. All I ask is that literature should not be taught under false pretenses.

Furthermore, I am in hearty accord with those who hold that the basis of all good writing is straight thinking. The student should be taught to use his mind; but I hold also that the best way for him to develop his mind is to exercise it, and the best way to exercise it is to endeavor to communicate what he supposes he thinks. The practice of oral communication which has been so successfully introduced into our class work by Professor Baldwin seems to me excellent, and it has the peculiar advantage that it does not leave the instructor's desk laden with a disheartening heap of themes. But oral composition, although valuable as one weapon in our armory, is not one that will serve on all occasions and meet all purposes. In my opinion there must be written themes, and many of them. The remedy for over-work in correction—again I say in my opinion—lies in an increase in the number of instructors and not in a decrease of the number of themes.

In this discussion of aims and methods we are, I hope, on common ground, and I have only taken up the time to mention these things in order to remove possible misunderstanding as to my own position. I do not know whether I shall carry you with me in the further statement that the results of our present teaching of composition are far from satisfactory. The majority of the boys do not learn to write. By "writing" I do not mean—the reiterated warning may be necessary—high artistic excellence or familiarity with the niceties of literary expression, but such a

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degree of skill in the art of presentation as is implied in the composition of an important business letter, a committee report, or a newspaper paragraph. I have never been taken for a pessimist, and I wish not to exaggerate; but, that is the impression I gain from my own experience and from conversation with other professors, in English and out of it. In the Middle West, from which I have recently come, there is great searching of heart among those responsible for the teaching of English composition, and in my view this is one of the most encouraging signs of the situation. One of the leading teachers in that region, where composition takes up more than half the time of the English staff, said to me, "There is nothing on which the University spends more money, and for which it gets a smaller return." The great public, which has recently shown an unusual interest in the efficiency of college education, complains of nothing so much as this, that the average college graduate cannot write a good letter or draw up a clear statement of facts. The Oxford tutors of Rhodes Scholars from the United States found the inability to write English the most conspicuous defect of the men sent across the Atlantic, and these confidential reports were drawn up separately and independently. If we could take these reports at their face value, positively as well as negatively, we should be driven to the curious conclusion that the American boy who is taught to write English cannot write English, while the English boy who is not taught, can. But even if this were true (which I am slow to believe) it would not follow that the abolition of English composition teaching in this country, or the adoption in its place of the classical curriculum in force in the schools from which the English universities draw the vast majority of their students would produce the same results on this side of the Atlantic. The English universities draw very largely from a select class, in which the use of correct English becomes habitual from a very early age, and in which the misuse of English is a mark of social disqualification. What we should need to do to obtain the benefits of the English system would be to import, not new methods or new teachers, but new parents.

But can the English boy write English? I doubt very much whether the power of expression is any commoner in that favored

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isle than it is with us. I remember, when I was teaching composition in a Canadian school of engineering, a Freshman who came to me and said, "Do I have to learn English? I don't need to. I know English. I am English." I assured him that his syllogism was faulty and, when he remained unconvinced, crushed him with the weight of the university regulations. I found that he did not know English, though I confess that he soon learnt it, so far as was deemed necessary for the professional purposes of the engineer's calling. He was a fair specimen of his class, and his superiority to the average American Freshman was not greater than would be accounted for by his superior social opportunities. In my opinion, it had nothing to do with his education, if that term is restricted to the hours spent in school. The fact is that the average English boy is not much better off than the average American boy in this respect, if we leave out of count the children of recently arrived foreign immigrants. An old colleague of mine in England, Mr. P. J. Hartog, the registrar of the University of London, does not take the favorable view of the English boy's ability to write English implied by the report of the Oxford tutors. He says bluntly:[1] "The average English boy . . . . cannot write English at all," and he gives ample evidence in support of his assertion, including a Board of Education report which states that the average pupil of the secondary schools under inspection in England "has no acquaintance with the English language as used by those who know how to use it, and it is not surprising that when he attempts to express himself on paper, or orally, he has little skill or facility." Mr. Hartog goes on to say: "We have seen that the English boy cannot express himself in English, while the French boy is capable of expressing himself in French. Thus the use of French methods as a remedy for English incompetence in this matter seems clearly indicated."

Is it possible that in this charming syllogism of Mr. Hartog's, "The English boy is not taught English and cannot write English; the French boy is taught French, and he can write French," there is a gleam of light for us to follow? I am afraid not. Mr. Hartog's description of the French system, in another contribution to the

[1] *The Writing of English*, p. 4.

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same subject,[1] is not encouraging from the point of view of American experience. He says: "A French boy learns by constant practice that if he has to write on any subject he must arrange his ideas on some definite plan before he begins to write. He is given easy subjects, and is provided with some of his material and with a plan ready made to begin with; and he is taught gradually how to find his own material and to make his own plan. He learns not only by careful writing but also by careful reading. . . . . The supreme beauty of French style depends on an absence of 'beauties of style.' Everything is subordinated to the matter in hand. And thus the French teaching of style at its best is as exact and scientific as it is literary." Now this is just what we are trying to do, and apparently the French are trying to do it in much the same way. In the theory and methods of teaching composition, as Professor Baldwin has shown in a paper which he was good enough to communicate to me before publication, the French are a long way behind American teachers. Professor Karl Young of the University of Wisconsin, who at my suggestion investigated the teaching of composition in French *Lycées* while he was on leave of absence last year, and published his observations in a recent number of *The English Journal*, comes to the same conclusion. In his account of French methods, he acknowledges, "the American teacher will find nothing conspicuously new or original. In devices for teaching composition, our own country has been, for a decade or two, uncommonly prolific, and it seems quite unnecessary for us to look abroad for further information as to what to do in the classroom."

It is perhaps not surprising that some professors of English should in utter discouragement go the length of advocating the abandonment of college composition altogether. It is difficult to treat such a policy with entire seriousness, but every suggestion, however unpromising, is worthy of a moment's consideration. What are the disadvantages of letting English composition in college look after itself? Obviously, in the first place, it would put out of harness many estimable English instructors who are at present pursuing an occupation which, at the very lowest estimation

[1] *The Nation's Needs*, pp. 120–21.

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may be described as innocuous. Some of these young men and women might be glad to be relieved of an uncongenial task if they were provided with berths in a department restricted to the teaching of literature; but it may be doubted whether this consummation is probable. If their only choice were the teaching of, say, mathematics or manual training, they would not be altogether grateful. But to be serious—and I promised to treat this suggestion seriously—I suppose letting composition take care of itself means leaving it to the care of the teachers of other subjects. If the teachers of other subjects were competent—a hypothesis I shall decline to discuss—I do not think they would have the time or the strength; we may put it in this way, that if they were able, they would not be willing. The Oxford way of teaching composition—one tutor to one student—is undoubtedly the best, but it is too expensive for adoption in American colleges, and indeed is being found too expensive for continuance there. The later movement, so I am informed, is in the direction of the teaching of small groups, because individual instruction takes up too much of the tutor's time.

English and French models alike fail us. Any improvement in college composition must be sought in a modification of the existing system, not in its abolition or in the imitation of foreign methods. What we need to do, in the first place, is to regard the system fairly and frankly, to recognize its defects, and to endeavor to remove them. Its main weakness, as I see it, is a sense of artificiality, existing chiefly in the mind of the student, but reacting also upon the mind of the instructor. The average Freshman regards his college writing as a stunt—a task as much apart from common life as the solving of a quadratic equation or the playing of a game of chess. If I may plead the excuse of age for again indulging in reminiscence, I should like to repeat the retort of a Middle Western student to whom I gave a low mark in a literature examination. She asked the reason, and I told her that her paper was not only lacking in knowledge but was very carelessly written. She flashed back, "Well, I thought it was an examination in literature. I did not know it was an exercise in composition. I don't call that a square deal." The notion that the English in which a literature paper is written does not matter holds of course all the

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more for reports in history or politics or economics, and the writing that the students do outside of college is more slovenly still. It is just this sense of college composition as a thing apart that gives an air of unreality to the whole course of instruction, and makes the work that is done ineffective. Obviously what we wish to cultivate is the habit of correct writing; and the first step seems to me to be to make sure that all the writing done in college is well done. This is my one practical suggestion, and it may be that you will hold that this suggestion is not practical. I am aware that there are obstacles to be overcome in the administration of such a plan, but they are not insuperable, especially in a college with a small staff and a proportionately limited number of courses; under the elaborate organization of a large college in which the elective system has been allowed to run riot, the task is, no doubt, more difficult. The professors of politics and history may fear that the students will take the time for writing off the time for reading; and the English instructors shudder at the prospect of more themes on unfamiliar subjects; physics and chemistry may suspect the possibility of servitude to English, and English that of servitude to chemistry and physics. But when these bogies have been induced to slay each other, and the good will of all concerned is secured, a workable scheme may be devised—I will not say easily, but with no more trouble than is involved in half a dozen other tasks of university administration. Those who think the plan worth trying may be interested in a program actually in force in the Columbia School of Journalism, which I append in the form of a circular drawn up by my friend, Dr. Gerhard R. Lomer.

This is a short step, but I believe that it is a step in the right direction. I am quite prepared to be told that it is a step in the wrong direction, that it implies a further divorce between thought and expression, and so on; but even the proof of that objection—and I do not believe it to be true—would not content me. I should like to know in what other direction we ought to move, or at any rate to be persuaded that we have reason to be satisfied with standing still.

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School of Journalism, 1912

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS FOR FRESHMEN COURSES

The plan here proposed for the assignment of written work for Freshmen in the School of Journalism at Columbia University involves the following factors:

1. The English course shall not be regarded as a subject entirely disconnected from the rest of the course and as having a subject-matter peculiarly its own. The various phases of the student's work are to be united as organically as possible; and to this end the process of expression in language seems to afford the most efficient means. All subjects, therefore, will be called upon to provide material for writing.

2. The aim of the English course is to develop the power of clear thinking and of coherent and effective expression. Hence the details of mechanical accuracy (spelling, punctuation, and grammar) are considered only in so far as they are essential to habits of accuracy and as a means for efficiency of communication.

3. In such courses as Journalism 1 (History and Principles of Natural Science) and Philosophy J (Introductory Course) where writing is regularly done, the written work is first read by the instructors in Journalism and in Philosophy, and is marked by them as is the custom in courses where credit is given for the collection and organization of material supplementary to class work. The themes are then passed on to the Instructor in English, who goes over each in detail as carefully as if the theme were originally presented as an exercise in English writing, and gives it a grade which counts for work in English.

4. All written work in the Freshman year, therefore, is read by at least one instructor and is returned to the students for correction. Conferences are held with individual students weekly and the themes are gone over by the Instructor in English, who indicates in both a general and a detailed way how the work could be improved.

5. With 18 required hours of class work, three of which are given to English, every student is required to write 1,500 words each week.

6. The dates in the schedule are those on which the themes are due and not the dates on which the assignments are to be made. It is suggested that the subjects for 1,000-word themes be announced at least ten days and those for 500-word themes a week before the dates on which they are due. It is requested that papers be read and handed to the Instructor of English at least by the end of the week following the day on which they become due.

1912	W	Oct. 16	Journalism	500 words
	FS	18, 19	Languages†	1,000
	MT	21, 22	History	500
	W	23	Philosophy (or Journalism*)	500

* For students who are not taking Philosophy.

† Including Composition and Translation from French and German.

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1912	FS	Oct.	25, 26	Languages	500 words
	M		28	Journalism	1,000
	FS	Nov.	1, 2	Languages	500
	M		4	Philosophy (or Journalism*)	500
	FS		8, 9	Languages	1,000
	MT		11, 12	Politics	500
	W		13	Journalism	500
	FS		15, 16	Languages	500
	MT		18, 19	History	500
	W		20	Philosophy (or Journalism*)	500
	FS		22, 23	Languages	500
	M		25	Journalism	1,000
	Th.	Nov.	28	Thanksgiving holidays begin.	
	MT	Dec.	2, 3	Languages	1,000
	W		4	Philosophy (or Journalism*)	500
	MT		9, 10	Politics	500
	W		11	Journalism	500
	FS		13, 14	Languages	500
	MT		16, 17	History	500
	W		18	Philosophy (or Journalism*)	500
	FS		20, 21	Languages	500
	Sun	Dec.	22	Christmas Holidays begin.	
1913	M	Jan.	6	Journalism	1,000
	FS		10, 11	Languages	500
	M		13	Philosophy (or Journalism*)	500
	FS		17, 18	Languages	1,000
	W		22	Midyear examinations begin.	

* For students who are not taking Philosophy.

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IRREGULARITIES IN VERSE

HORACE A. EATON
Syracuse University

In the desire to reduce poetics to a science, there has been an undue emphasis upon the regularities of verse and a neglect of the irregularities. One could read a score of books upon versification almost without suspecting that there is such a thing as conflict or variation under the laws, and that it is in this very conflict or variation from the norm that a large part of the charm in verse lies. Writers upon poetics from Coventry Patmore to Professor Charlton M. Lewis have touched upon this side of metrics, and Professor Lewis has done a good deal more; but even he has not carried the matter so far as it will go, nor has he, nor anyone, pointed out the complete importance of it or its wider relationships.

The following paper does not in any sense pretend to be exhaustive; but it tries to indicate the more important points involved and their large significance.

From one point of view the whole aim of art is to impose a little order upon the apparent chaos of all this unintelligible world. From the incoherent experiences of life, the story-teller selects and gives to incidents a pattern which the multiplicity of real life does not have. The slovenly speech of every day becomes a more or less regular prose, moving forward with some sort of rhythmic tread from somewhere to somewhere. The story in prose is like that wonderful bivouac of the immortal poets in Dante, whose light conquers, no matter how feebly, its little hemisphere of darkness. When the prose becomes verse, and the narrative, epic, the light of order grows. Selection of experience becomes much more rigorous, and the speech of every day is used with exacting care; loose rhythms take on the regular beat of meter, and thought becomes gilded with the glint of rhyme and bound by the stern limits of line and stanza. The grip of order has closed upon the inconsequential matter of experience, and harder, if possible, upon daily

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speech. The more firmly the material has been controlled by the laws of selection, rhythm, and meter, the more the product has risen in art value. So poetry is the highest of the lingual arts.

Were we dealing here with the laws of so-called "inanimate" nature, with the laws of heat or sound, they would have to be emended to meet exceptions. Elastic laws are unknown in natural science. But in poetry, as in all other arts, we are dealing not with "natural" or "scientific" facts, but with human. Here laws are flexible; "generally speaking," "other things being equal," "approximately" are necessary qualifications. Thus, for example, rhythm is defined as "the recurrence of similar phenomena at regular intervals of time."[1] This reads like a scientific definition; but apply it with precision, and nothing but a clock or an engine could be called rhythmical—even the beating of the human heart or human speech would be unrhythmical.

But the "approximate regularity" of the law of rhythm does not annihilate regularity. The modification does not mean chaos; the law still holds "approximately." And the important fact is that this flexibility of the law actually makes its manifestations delightful. It is as if the mind greeted with the enthusiasm of kinship the humanizing touch in what would otherwise be unhuman or mechanical.

A line of poetry is, of course, theoretically divided into a certain number of equal, or nearly equal, time intervals which are measured off, or separated from one another, by stresses or accents. Thus in any given line of verse, as, for example, the opening of Gray's "Elegy," there are five time intervals, each with one stress,

The cúr|few tólls | the knéll | of párt|ing dáy.

Of course the "Elegy" is in iambic pentameter.

The measure struck in the first line continues throughout. Indeed, we expect after hearing a few feet that iamb will follow iamb with regularity; and soon, that line will follow line, and stanza, stanza, so that we have in our ears a sort of skeleton rhythm or plan, which so long as we read the poem controls us and it. It is as masterful and definite as the insistent one, two, three of a waltz which may run on in our heads long after the melody has

[1] Lewis, *Principles of English Verse*, p. 2.

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stopped. Iambic foot, pentameter line, four-line stanza, alternating rhyme—these together make up the metrical scheme of the poem. It is the embodiment of order, the system which has made of Gray's thoughts and of his words a lovely pattern of formal design.

Yet as one reads over the first stanza of the "Elegy," one finds that the time intervals are not equal. I instinctively dwell longer upon "tolls" and "knell" than upon "day" and, perhaps, "part-(ing)," so that the second and third feet are longer in duration than the first, the fourth, and the fifth; and in the second line, the third foot is very decidedly longer in utterance than any of the others—"winds slow(ly)" occupies obviously more time than the following "(slow)ly o'er."

	slow	slow		
The cur-	few tolls	the knell	of part-	ing day,
		slow		
The low-	ing herd	winds slow-	ly o'er	the lea.

I am not going to venture to attempt to differentiate accurately the time length of the other feet in the stanza. I am sure, however, that a discriminating reader would vary the time length of almost every foot; but nothing is harder to test and measure, and the point is made if I have indicated that one does make some difference in the length of feet almost unconsciously. The time intervals vary because the variation helps to express the underlying thought, and also because the variation gives the ear a certain degree of pleasure.

In the preceding paragraph we have been concerned with nothing but the time intervals of the feet, or rather, the time intervals between the stresses. Such time intervals are very variable, depending largely upon the meaning of the line. We read fast or slow as the thought suggests to our minds rapidity or slowness of motion. This influence upon tempo, to use a musical term, is not the same in all persons, but it is greater generally than is usually admitted. Metricists are too apt to claim that certain moods are inevitably connected with certain measures. Thus, for example, the six-syllable iambic is sometimes said to be always mournful. But experience leads one to wise qualification. The chances are strongly in favor of a measure being grave or gay according to the thought put into it, rather than because of some predetermination

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of character. Certainly in any given poem a line hurries or slows up as the thought demands. Thus in the "Elegy" the line

Brushing with hasty steps the dews away

trips more blithely, is read actually more quickly, than

Slow through the churchyard path we saw him borne.

The theoretic length of line is the same in each case, the arrangement of feet is the same. The chief difference is that the one expresses haste, the other deliberation, and the time intervals in the second line are longer than in the first. The same metrical scheme prevails throughout the poem, but that scheme in the matter of time intervals, in other words, of speed, is elastic, and we find that the regularity of rhythm is very "approximate" indeed.

So much for the time length of the foot. But rhythm has to be measured off by the stresses or "accents." Now, according to that metrical scheme, which underlies this same "Elegy," there are five feet of equal length—we have found how variable is that equality—and five stresses of equal weight. Is there variation here also?

Certainly no one could read those opening lines as if to the regular tap of a pencil with equal emphasis on each of the five stressed syllables. It is easy to recognize the fact and yet hard to note the results when one reads the lines naturally. Indeed, I am far from sure of the relative emphasis of all five stresses in any one of the lines; but I am sure that they are not all equal—not entirely sure that they are not all unequal. For convenience, let me mark the stressed syllables 1, 2, and 3 according to their relative weight, leaving out of account the technically unstressed syllables.

The ^{1}curfew ^{2}tolls the ^{1}knell of ^{3}parting ^{1}day,

The ^{2}lowing ^{1}herd winds ^{1}slowly ^{3}o'er the ^{2}lea.

The reader will probably object to this classification of stresses; I very probably shall agree with him. But the point is not accuracy of notation, but the recognition of the extraordinary variation we admit in reading a line of poetry from the theoretic metrical scheme which underlies the piece. And there is another point, that it is the meaning of the line which controls the variations in stress and

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forces us to interpret liberally the rhythmical regularity with which we start.

Theoretically, again, the unstressed syllables, which fill the gaps between the stressed, are all alike in their inconsequence. But actually they are unequal. For example, in the second line there is a theoretically unaccented word, "winds." Of course it rebels against its inglorious position, and, to my ear, receives more stress—in spite of scheme—than the supposedly emphatic "o'er"—"winds slówly ó'er the léa." This kind of rebellion is more often met with in more modern and freer poetry, but that it appears at all in this elegy of the eighteenth century with its keen feeling for regularity and convention makes the variation only the more striking.

Again, each line of poetry—certainly each line of more than four feet—has for ease of utterance at least one pause, the caesura. Each measure has its own particular point where the metrical flow naturally stops for a second of time. In the "Elegy," for instance, that moment of pause occurs after the second foot, the point where it is easiest to stop if one were chanting the lines in mere sing-song without regard to sense. But it is not the formal scheme, as we are beginning to discover, which has its way. In the constant struggle which goes on between form and sense, the sense at least partly wins out; and in any good verse the grand pause or pauses shift now forward now backward as the mood or the poet wills.

And, once more, since we are sharpening our ears for all the pauses of verse, there are those less obvious sorts which are in the mouths of some readers not pauses at all, but mere "holds," to use the musical term—those suspensions which are not important enough to be called caesural, but yet sufficient to separate word or thought groups from each other and so to "phrase" the lines. In music, phrasing binds together certain related notes by smooth transition from one to the other, and at the same time it separates by momentary pause or suspension groups of notes from one another, so that a passage takes on a clean-cut meaning. The same thing holds in poetry, and in prose, too, intelligently read. Words are not spoken individually, but in groups, and these groups are separated from each other to bring out clearly their relations.

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Such phrasing, then, is present in any line with its twofold function of binding and separating, often pushing the caesural pause to one side, often ignoring pauses at the end of lines, often introducing slight pauses or suspensions almost too slight to be recorded, yet none the less real. They play about the schematic meter, never destroying it, but giving it life.

A rather clumsy attempt to indicate the placing of these pauses in that first stanza follows: in which the caesural pauses are marked by a double line, and the phrase pause by a single:

The curfew || tolls the knell | of parting day,
The lowing herd || winds slowly | o'er the lea,
The ploughman || homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world | to darkness || and to me.

In the first line the theoretic caesura falls after "tolls"; but one unwillingly divides the predicate so. Instinct and the meaning force us to put the grand pause after "curfew"—it falls here in the middle of a foot—and making "tolls the knell" into a group, just slightly hints its separation from "of parting day." Similarly, with the other lines. Such interpretation is largely personal; but every careful reader will introduce of necessity some such pauses and phrasing. We have, then, still another way in which the meaning plays with, and about, the metrical scheme.

But we have not even yet exhausted the infractions of the metrical canons of the line. Iambic pentameter is the measure, each foot consisting of one stressed and one unstressed syllable. But now and then to show independence the meter substitutes a trochaic for an iambic foot. In such a line as

Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove,

or

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,

the stress comes on the first syllable of the line. Such variations are rare exceptions in the "Elegy," far more frequent elsewhere, but they are deliberate. Gray might as well have written

And muttering wayward fancies he would rove,

and so have been regular. But he preferred to set the pronunciation of a word at odds with the iambic measure. Similarly in the second line cited, he deliberately takes a striking phrase and

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by setting it into an iambic line lets the line take the consequences. To be sure, one may scan the line, as the metricists do, with the stress of the first foot upon the "from." But no one ever emphasized the "from" in Mr. Hardy's title, *Far from the Madding Crowd*, nor does one here. The line frankly begins with the stressed monosyllable, and so substitutes a trochee for an iamb as the first foot. Here is variation again; again conflict between sense and scheme, and the sense wins out delightfully.

And then the two-syllable iambic foot may have an extra light syllable thrown in, so that it becomes an anapaest, as in the phrase

> To quénch the blúshes óf ingénuous sháme.

You may prefer to try to keep this foot—"(ingen)uous sháme"—an iamb by running the two light syllables together into one, or nearly one, or you may take pleasure in the deliberate introduction of an extra syllable; but in any case there is elasticity, variation.

The possible variations are becoming confusing, not to say wearisome, but the end is in sight, though not here. For there is the liberty which may be taken with the line length. It may have a syllable added or taken away. There is no example in the "Elegy" of a line of less than ten syllables, but there are a couple of lines of eleven, if we may read "tower" and "bower" as disyllabic. Then there is the occasional example of the thought overflowing the line unit and spilling over—the run-on line; as where Gray writes

> nor circumscribed alone
> Their growing virtues.

Rarer still there is the spilling-over of the stanza, as

> Th' applause of listening senates to command,
> The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
> To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
> And read their history in a nation's eyes,
> Their lot forbad.

Then there is the rhyme, which is regularly faultless, but which now and then becomes merely approximate. Even Gray, the careful and conservative, permits the rhyme of "toil" and "smile" conventionally accepted in the eighteenth century, and such eye-rhymes as "withstood," "blood," and "rove," "love."

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In all these many ways—in meter, foot, stress, pause, line, rhyme, stanza—the classic Gray, like all English poets, admits variations from the metrical scheme; in all these many ways the verse is elastic and alive. Is there anything left of the regular? Have we not reached poetic anarchy where variation is all and rule is nothing?

Rules still prevail, for they are human rules and rules of art. A careful summary of results leaves us certain that in spite of an occasional run-on stanza, most of the stanzas are complete in themselves; that in spite of run-on lines and lines with eleven syllables here and there, most of the lines are not run-on and contain the orthodox number of syllables; that in spite of free rhymes, most are faultless; that in spite of trochaic or anapaestic substitutions, most of the feet are iambic. There is, to be sure, far more freedom of variation in the matter of pauses, in the time length of feet, in emphasis of stressed and unstressed syllables; but even so, there is no shock to the ear, and never for a moment do we forget the metrical scheme of the poem as a whole. The rhythm sways to and fro, but it is not destroyed. Indeed, this elasticity and freedom actually emphasize the underlying rhythm. Perfect regularity would mean monotony, and monotony destroys attention. The very variations keep the mind alert and appreciative of the rhythm which is so strong that it can afford to give way here and there, and rejoice in the unexpectedness of pause and stress.

A thoroughgoing treatise would dwell at some length upon the relative importance of variations, upon the practice of poets in using conflict for poetic effect. It would seek to answer the question of how different schools of poetry have variously indulged in the different kinds of conflict; how some have stood more firmly by the regularity of scheme, and some have carried freedom almost to the point of license; how, even within the same school, different poets have given rein to their individuality and have found expression in the greater or less infraction of the norm; how different kinds of poetry from their very nature and purpose, and different measures from an innate something belonging to them, differ in the degree in which conflict is practiced. Close analysis might, moreover, point out the actual effects produced by certain vari-

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ations, and their relative value for expressing certain moods. In other words, a thoroughgoing treatise might well, after establishing in all its ramifications the reality and importance of conflict, proceed to historical or an aesthetic examination of its use in literature. But the purpose of this paper is merely to call attention once more to the fundamental idea, and to suggest, rather than to prove, its far-reaching importance in the world of poetry and art.

No person who has ears to hear can doubt the satisfaction which this conflict in verse brings with it; and yet the fact that similar conflict is the source of pleasure in the other arts gives reassurance that the principle is broadly based.

Most obviously, music exhibits a similarity to poetry in this matter of conflict—with its theoretic time scheme, indicated more formally than in poetry by the initial $\frac{3}{4}$ or $\frac{6}{8}$ written on the staff; with its carefully indicated tempo, *andante* or *allegro*, often made precise by the definite number of beats per minute, noted for metronomic verification; with the natural rhythm which tends inevitably to emphasize certain notes in the measure. In short, the mechanical features are all deliberately fixed in advance. Yet the composer himself is not content to rest there. He marks passages *ritardando*, *accelerando*, *piano*, *forte;* he indicates stresses often at variance with the chosen beat. We thus have syncopation where the unexpected note is emphasized; we have phrasing in which the flow of melody runs counter to the measure and the beat; we have the rhythm of one voice against that of another, as where four notes run against three or five; we have strange modulation or progression in modern music whose piquancy and charm are due to the fact that they go counter to what we have always regarded as conventionally fixed; and we have many another variation unknown to poetry, made possible by the endless opportunities of the simultaneous sounding of many parts or voices. In music as in poetry, moreover, certain kinds tend to indulge in bolder and more frequent conflicts; the modern being much freer in form than that of ages more given to orderly expression.

Or turn to painting where the comparison with poetry becomes obviously more difficult. Conflict is present here also. Less formal in its development than either poetry or music, it relies less

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upon the freedom from law for its effects. Painting is a spatial, not a temporal art, and the opportunities of conflict are reduced to spatial relations. And yet in the spatial relations the picture must have order, composition. The balance, the emphasis, which is necessary in any satisfactory painting, springs from the fundamental demand of formal and sane grouping of naturally unrelated facts or objects. Thus in painting we have at one end the formal balance of design which we see in the primitive Italian Madonna with the Virgin and Child sitting primly in the middle, and carefully placed angels and saints on either side, and on the other the free modern picture in which balance is so concealed that it is hardly recognized except in so far as it is unconsciously felt to be adequate. But through all the range of painting, in the hands of all the great painters, composition, the formal balancing of object, color, line, and shadow against object, color, line, and shadow is felt as much in its way as the iambic pentameter is felt in the organ music of Milton's blank verse; and the freedom which acknowledges and yet transcends the formal pattern is a source of pleasure in the carefully composed picture as well as in music or poetry itself.

The same sort of conflict is likewise found and felt in sculpture and architecture. Spatial like painting, they have even less opportunity to show variation in devious ways. And yet architecture, especially, now and again makes bold use of freedom in transcending formal balance and gains delightful effects by skilful variation in placing masses, color, line, and shadow. Sculpture and architecture both, then, fall in with the other arts in deriving joy from the free and playful obedience to elastic laws.

Thus we may end as we began, only, let us hope, with a keener appreciation of what this conflict means. Order is, indeed, heaven's first law; it is the prerequisite of all art, whether temporal or spatial; but it is only when the formality of order is transcended, and the law is, as it were, humanized, that we reach the highest in poetry, music, and the other arts.

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ORAL ENGLISH IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

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A small boy is said to have defined "elocution" as something they kill folks with in the United States. In a discussion of oral English it may be well for us to bear in mind that this part of the English work is not "elocution." Neither can it stand off by itself like a sore thumb. It must be correlated with the work in written composition and in literature.

My purpose is to explain what we are doing at the Baltimore City College to meet the needs of our boys in oral expression; to solve the very difficult problem of how to make classroom English the English of the baseball field and of the street. The method which I shall try to explain is the result of three years of experimentation and study. We feel that we have worked out a plan which, while imperfect in many ways and calling for constant revisions and modifications, is nevertheless doing our boys much good.

Our plan is designed, in a general way, to do the following things: first, to purify language, by correcting idioms, by removing slang, and by enlarging and enriching the vocabulary; second, to make language effective by constant attention to correct grammatical usage and rhetorical structure in the sentence, the paragraph, and the whole composition; third, to make expression effective by drilling in distinct enunciation, correct pronunciation, and by freeing the voice and body from mannerisms and constrictions; fourth, to vitalize the subject of English, to stimulate thought, and to make the subject practical while retaining the cultural and aesthetic values.

With these general considerations before us, let us try to answer the two leading questions which naturally arise: What does our plan include? and How do we teach it?

In the first place, it includes much practice in reading aloud.

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Ruskin said, "If I could have a son or daughter possessed with but one accomplishment in life, it should be that of good reading." Also, Longfellow says, "Of equal honor with him who *writes* a grand poem is he who *reads* it grandly." Again, Carlyle says, "We are all poets when we read a poem *well*." These quotations, imply a high ideal of what is considered good reading, but is it not an art worthy of our most careful cultivation? And it is not so impossible of attainment as it may seem at first sight—a few minutes of practice each day in class and at home, kept up for three or four years, will work wonders. Little technical knowledge of reading need be taught—constant insistence upon proper phrasing and pausing, and upon intensely thinking the thought, is often sufficient. The main requirement is concentration of thought, riveting the thinking process upon the meaning of the text. This may often be secured by asking a few simple questions. It is surprising how often the clear understanding of a word or phrase illuminates an entire passage for the young mind groping about in the darkness of some meaningless phrase, and causes the pupil to appreciate the meaning of the text and to realize the appropriate feeling or emotion. And here we are teaching both expression and literary appreciation.

In the second place, oral English includes practice in giving declamations. A short poem or prose gem, thoroughly memorized, may be made the basis of much interesting and helpful drilling in enunciation and in pronunciation, and in the many technical matters which help the pupil to realize the thought and to appreciate the spirit of the piece. Among the favorite declamations are the following: "Charge of the Light Brigade," "Lincoln's Gettysburg Address," "The Psalm of Life," "The Constitution," "Building of the Ship," "The Wreck of the Schooner Hesperus." Frequently we have parts taken from the literature texts, given as declamations or dialogues, and even as modest efforts at dramatizations. For instance, when studying *Silas Marner* the boys enter eagerly into the spirit of the Rainbow scene from the sixth chapter and dramatize it with spirit and evident enjoyment. These exercises are used in the first and second years. They are found to be

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helpful in overcoming timidity and in forming habits of freedom of expression and ease of bearing and correct position.

The third method of teaching oral English in our school is by means of oral themes. These may be of almost any sort practicable for written composition. For convenience and as a means of emphasis, we divide this work into four parts, according to the four forms of composition. In the first year simple narration of personal incidents is used. These are often varied by having reports of conversations overheard on the street or in the lunch hall; again, by having the reproduction of stories, tales of adventure, or fables—for instance, a chapter from *Ivanhoe*, from *Treasure Island*, from Hawthorne's tales, ballads, etc. The second form of composition used in the first year is exposition, made as simple and personal as possible by having such subjects as, "How I Made a Kite," "How I Taught Fido to Beg," etc. Throughout the first year little criticism is given, except by way of insistence upon correct grammar, distinct enunciation, and erect position, the main object being to inculcate the habit of free and simple yet effective expression of ideas.

In the second year our efforts are redoubled, emphasizing narration, description, and exposition. The boys are now over much of their timidity and speak with more freedom and ease. Consequently we can expect more of them and we require longer efforts. We now give more detailed requirements in technique. For instance, at each period we emphasize a different detail. Some of these details are the following: position, tone projection, grammar, unity, coherence, emphasis, suspense and climax, clearness. Here are a few of the topics used during the past year: "Trouble with Our Boat," "Our Organ-Grinder," "The Funniest Man I Ever Saw," "What Happened in the Yard Today," "How I Learned to Ride a Wheel," "How to Make a Baseball Field."

In the third year all four forms of composition are used, but the emphasis is placed upon description and argument. The boys are now allowed to select their own subjects oftener, for their experiences are becoming wider, their judgments more to be depended upon. We now encourage the use of the newspaper

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and magazines in gathering material. But here, as throughout the course, the premium is placed upon absolutely original work, work which is gotten from actual experiences and that which has an intimate relation to actual life. For instance, a few of the topics used during the past winter are as follows: "The Clean City Crusade," "Election Frauds," "Types of the Baltimore City College Student," "The Commission Form of Government," "The Smoke Nuisance," "Public Health in Baltimore," "Interscholastic v. Interclass Contests in Athletics," "The City College Should Publish a Monthly Paper."

In point of structure the emphasis is now placed upon rhetorical principles and the development and the delivery of a live and interesting speech. We now begin to criticize severely. At first this criticism is done entirely by the teacher; later the boys are encouraged to criticize one another in a frank but good-natured way. Often the office of critic is distributed among the various members of the class. The class is divided into sections, each section being responsible for a particular thing—one for bearing, another for enunciation, still another for grammar, etc. Criticisms are made as soon after the recitation as convenient—sometimes after each speech. Again, to expedite the work in a large class, the final ten minutes of the period is reserved for a clearing of all mistakes and criticisms. In such case the students who act as critics are given credit for their work and are in turn criticized by the teacher. In this year increased attention is given to debating. After a study of argument and much practice in the making of briefs, the oral work is given over to debating for a month or more, culminating in a formal debate, the debaters being selected from those who have done the best work in the informal debating. Also in this year we give more technique in structure of the speech, in delivery, and in bearing.

In the fourth year we use the same methods with enlarged and intensified treatment, as a matter of reviewing and drilling, in order to thoroughly fix habits of full, free, and effective expression. But we do not stop with reviewing former work. Here we emphasize argument. The distinctly oral work of at least one-half the year is devoted to constant and careful drilling upon argument. Burke's

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Speech on Conciliation, of course, serves as the basis for the technical knowledge and inspiration. Again, up-to-date and live topics are used, such as deal with current news, local and national politics, school policies and conditions, etc. These exercises lead up to debates, which are of frequent occurrence. At first only such subjects as are within the range of the boys' information and experience are used. Subjects can always be found which the boys will discuss for the sake of interest rather than for the sake of argument. When a boy has something of his own to say, there is an admirable chance for profitable instruction in public speaking. And it is here that we have our best work. Debating is a kind of *game* and has much in common with baseball and football. It is a most valuable instrument and one which we cannot afford to ignore. Not merely is it an admirable means of teaching expression and an aid in developing language, but it contributes directly toward the highest type of citizenship. It teaches the boy to refrain from basing his judgments upon ignorance; it helps him to sound the depth or the shallowness of his own knowledge and to discriminate between the value of things, and thereby to reach the main issue of a question; and finally, it leads him to respect the opinions of others.

As to the matter of method in this form of oral English, the following we have found to work well. A brief, suitable for a three- or five-minute speech, is called for upon a certain day. These briefs are examined and returned with criticisms and suggestions for development. This prevents careless and slovenly work and insures preparation. Several days later the speeches are delivered, the members of the class acting as judges. The four—or in some cases six—members delivering the best speeches constitute the team for the next formal debate. There are three or four formal debates during the year, the final one being a contest between two sections of the same class or between two different classes. The students enter eagerly into these debates and need little spurring to induce them to put forth their best efforts. However, interest is often heightened by having the principal or a visitor act as judge. At the close of the period the teacher criticizes the work in detail. Usually each member of the class is

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required to write out his criticism from notes taken during the debate.

A fifth means of giving practice in oral English is our method of dealing with supplementary reading. Each boy is required to read at least six books during the year. Six periods during the year are devoted to book reviews, when each boy is required to speak about his book. The nature of the speech is determined by one of six different points of view—setting, plot, characters, purpose of the author, background, incidents. This period, among the students of the higher classes particularly, is regarded as one of the most interesting periods of the month.

Thus we have seen that oral English at the City College includes five special subjects, but our efforts do not stop there. Oral English with us is a point of view rather than a particular subject. It is our intention and our effort to make it permeate all our work, determining our method of treatment of many literature texts; being used, here, to lend variety to otherwise monotonous work, there, to interest or awaken a mentally sleepy class or pupil; again, to correlate the work with written composition and with literature; and finally, to co-operate with all teachers who believe that good English should be *habitual* rather than occasional.

A few miscellaneous considerations concerning our work in oral English may be helpful. We have found that, in order to avoid waste of effort, it is necessary for the teacher to keep a record of the work of each student, noting a few faults and failings, at each recitation. This need not be a burden to the teacher—in fact, all of it may just as well be done by a member of the class. This gives the teacher the very decided advantage of having a permanent record of the improvement of each student. With a very little ingenuity, any teacher or pupil can arrange a simple yet effective scheme of criticism in any ordinary notebook.

Another device which may add interest to the work is to have contests in oral discussion. This has been successfully tried in Lake Forest College. We are planning to have contests next year of a similar nature. A list of topics, based upon high-school studies and high-school interests, will be submitted to the students several hours before the contest begins. The boys will have an

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opportunity to think over the topic which they will select but will not be permitted to consult books nor to talk to instructors. The contestants will be chosen from among those who have the highest grades for oral work in class. This contest may well serve as the climax to a year's work and prizes may be offered to the winners.

The results of our work in oral English are evident and most encouraging. We have found that our boys express themselves more freely and correctly, not merely in the English room but in all departments of their school work and in ordinary conversation. During the past year, men in other departments, not knowing of our work, have commented upon the general improvement in expression. Then, too, this work has vitalized the entire English course and more interest is being taken in the subject of English. The boys regard the present course in English as more practical and useful than the old one. At the close of a year's work I asked a class of thirty Seniors to write a paper, frankly and freely criticizing the present course in English. Twenty boys made special mention of the oral features of the year's work, many of them expressing themselves as having gotten more real benefit from the oral than from any other part of the work. No one criticized the oral work unfavorably. In brief, we have found that oral English stimulates thought, producing sound thinking; that it enhances literary appreciation; that it arouses interest and awakens the inert; that it tends to give confidence in one's own power of expression, and that it inculcates and fixes the habit of clear, correct, straightforward, and effective expression of one's own thoughts and feelings.

Just a word more in answer to several objections which may be made to this work. Someone may say that it all sounds good, but how can we find time for the extra work? In answer to this objection let me remind you that nearly every feature of this plan correlates with other work, that in nearly every case we are "killing two birds with one stone," that we are not adding a new subject to our already overcrowded curriculum, but rather that we are changing the emphasis and vitalizing our work, making it contribute to utilitarian as well as to cultural aims in education. Of course we should have more time for English work, but

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if we do not have it, let us make the best possible use of what we have.

On describing our course to a friend, I was not surprised to hear this comment: "You are trying to cram a mountain into a pail." Such may be the case, but let us not find fault with the mountain; let us be thankful for the *pail*—we may get a *barrel* by and by.

Again, many may think that this work calls for a special teacher of elocution. Not at all. The teacher must be enthusiastic and thoroughly alive, of course. Technical training is helpful and necessary to the highest success in this as in any art, but much good can be done by the earnest and enthusiastic teacher.

In conclusion, allow me to express the hope and the belief that within a few years the emphasis in the teaching of English will be completely changed and that college-entrance requirements will call for reasonable proficiency in *oral* expression.

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THE SCHOOLBOY'S NIGHTMARE

RANDOLPH C. WILSON
De Witt Clinton High School, New York

[*Motif:* "The Daffodils," by Wm. Wordsworth]

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze. . . . .

FOREWORD

The present movement in the city high schools toward teaching literature through dramatization has its limitations.

SCENE: *A bedroom. A small boy,* aetat. 14, *a first-term student in one of the city high schools, discovered asleep. He turns about, and begins to moan, and mutters, "Yes, sir," "I forgot—" "We had so much other work to do." The scene gradually changes to a classroom. One boy, Jacob Keslowitz, sitting alone, pallid and nerveless. In the front of the room are all the teachers of the English Department*—Mr. French, Miss Miller, Mr. Smythe, Mr. Markham, Mr. Goodrich, Miss Coxe, Mr. Burch, *and others—twenty in all.*

(*The bell rings, teachers straighten up, boy sinks down in his chair.*)

Chorus of Teachers: The class will come to order.

(Boy *raises himself one quarter of an inch.*)

Mr. Burch: Keslowitz, read the diary for the last recitation.

Boy (reading): Yesterday, we come into the English class—

Miss Miller (to boy): Did you think about that before you wrote it, or did you write it offhand?

Boy: I thinked about it.

Teachers: I what?

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Boy (rattled): I thunk—

Teachers (some standing):

I—what?

Boy: I thought.

Mr. Williams (handing him large sheet of paper):

Write "I thought" twenty-five times, please.

Mr. Smythe (to Miss Coxe):

Probably his ideas were *thunked*, if I may judge from the result.

Mr. Markham: Now, boy, we have for today a beautiful little poem entitled "The Daffodils." Who wrote it, Keslowitz?

Boy: Robert Browning.

Teachers: Who?

Boy (perceiving dimly he has made an error):

Wadsworth.

Miss Miller (throws up her hands and a look of infinite despair crosses her face):

Keslowitz, that shows again how little you thought. Spell it.

Boy: W-o-r-d-s-w-o-r-t-h.

Teachers: Pronounce.

Boy (wearily): Wordsworth.

Mr. Williams (handing him another sheet of paper):

"Wordsworth"—twenty-five times.

Mr. French: Well, class, this is an exquisite little poem, revealing the soft and tender emotions of a man who sees beauty, joy, gladness, and hope in the sun-kissed daffodils.

Mr. Smythe: I remember, boy, the first time I read that poem, and it appealed to me so much that I filled my room with daffodils.

Miss Coxe: How do you know that the author was English, Keslowitz?

Keslowitz: Because he was born in England.

Miss Coxe: No, but because only in England do the daffodils grow in the way he describes. I saw many banks of daffodils there last summer.

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Miss Miller (to teachers):
We are getting away from the point, however. Let us be pertinent. Put leading questions.

Mr. Williams: Who was Wordsworth, Keslowitz?

Boy: He was an American author.

(Miss Coxe *faints*)

Mr. Goodrich: Still living?

Boy: No, he died about four hundred years ago.

Mr. Jenkins (sternly):
Boy, you are unprepared. Zero; and if you get another, I'll inform your parents.

(Boy *looks dazed.*)

Miss Miller: Did you read the poem, Keslowitz?

Boy: No, ma'am; yes, ma'am.

Miss Waters: Keslowitz, how would a bank of daffodils affect you?

Boy: It would make me feel good.

Teachers: It would make me feel what?

Boy: Well.

Mr. Williams (handing him sheet of yellow paper):
Twenty-five times.

Miss Miller: Go to the board, Keslowitz, and give us a digest of the poem.

(Boy *goes to the board and writes. Teachers busy themselves making out daily reports. Boy after a very bad five minutes takes seat.*)

Mr. French: Here we have Keslowitz' summary of the poem. (*Reads*) "It shows how a poet while thinking, thinks in his mind what a nice poem he could make up of the daffodils which were flowers."

Teachers: What a criticism. Is that English? Where do you suppose he thinks; in his feet? Is that sense?

Miss Waters: If you thought in your mind, you would not write anything like that.

Mr. Chambers: Brother Keslowitz, can you analyze that sentence.

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Mr. French: A little obscure, Keslowitz, but at least you have discovered that daffodils are flowers.

(Keslowitz *looks a trifle bewildered.*)

Miss Coxe: Keslowitz, do you really understand the poem?

Keslowitz (weakly): Yes, ma'am.

Miss Coxe: Well, then, I would like to see you act it. Put it into play form and go through all the actions and dialogue.

Keslowitz: Must I be the poet or the daffodil?

Miss Coxe: You be the poet, and let that corner of the room be the daffodils, and act as naturally as you can.

Miss Miller (to teachers):

I think it is *such* a good idea to dramatize everything. The boys will understand it much better.

(Keslowitz *rises from his seat and walks toward back of room.*)

Mr. Williams: Not too fast, remember you're sad.

Mr. French: You must look as though you had just lost ten cents.

Mr. Chambers: Be more graceful, Keslowitz; remember you're a poet.

Miss Moore: How lonely you are, Keslowitz.

Keslowitz: Lonely as a cloud.

Miss Moore: Well, go ahead.

(Keslowitz *ponders, trying to look as lonely as a cloud. Suddenly he pulls a rather soiled handkerchief from his pocket and waves it about his head.*)

Miss Coxe: What are you doing?

Keslowitz: That's the cloud.

Mr. Smythe: Pretty dark one, that.

Mr. Williams: A little more spirit in your acting, Keslowitz. You are not doing anything.

Miss Moore: Raise your feet from the floor. Poets don't shuffle when they walk.

Mr. Whitehouse: Isn't there any talking in this, Keslowitz?

Keslowitz: No, the poet was alone.

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Mr. Whitehouse: Well, you must put some dialogue into it. Meet someone as you wander and talk to him.

Keslowitz: Clouds don't talk.

Mr. Whitehouse: You're not a cloud: you're just lonely like a cloud.

Mr. Smythe: Like a thick one.

(Keslowitz *stops and speaks to radiator.*)

Keslowitz: Good morning.

Answer: Good morning.

Keslowitz: Have you seen any daffodils?

Answer: Yes, sir, right over there.

Keslowitz: Then I go there; I am looking for daffodils this morning.

(Keslowitz *walks away from radiator and stops in front of book-lockers.*)

Miss Coxe: Now, there are the daffodils. Act just as though you were the poet and seeing the daffodils nodding in the breeze, your sadness disappears.

(Keslowitz *appears bewildered at the effort of finding joy in a row of book-lockers.*)

Mr. Whitehouse: A little talking, now; put your thoughts into words and say them as clearly and simply as you can.

Mr. Smythe: He'll be simple, don't worry.

Keslowitz (addressing book-lockers):

I am very sad; oh, how nice you are! Now I am happy beside the lake, beneath the trees.

Miss Coxe: That is very good. Can't you continue and do the rest of the poem—the part where you lie down on the couch.

(Keslowitz *sees nothing but desks to lie upon and hopes the bell will ring soon.*)

Miss Miller: He doesn't seem to be very good at this. Let us try him at letter-writing.

Mr. Burch: Yes, I think the poem is much more suited for transposing into letter form, than for dramatizing.

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Mr. French: You destroy the beauty if you do that. Why tear to pieces the delicacy of a creation like this?

Miss Moore: Keslowitz, write a letter to a friend telling him how you have just read the poem and how much you like it.

(Keslowitz, *having thought the poem a silly thing, and mentally exhausted after his efforts to dramatize it, feels himself sinking. He goes to the board and begins his heading,*

182 East 6th St.
Manhattan N.Y.)

Miss Moore: What is the Manhattan for?

Mr. Smythe: Did you ever see a comma, Keslowitz?

Miss Miller: Why in the world don't you punctuate?

(Keslowitz *jabs a few commas and periods indiscriminately through the heading. Just then the bell rings furiously several times as a signal for the fire-drill. The teachers jump up and yell several commands at the boy.* "Quickly." "Get into line." "Drop your chalk." *Several of the men grab him and he is propelled vigorously both by word and force out of the door. The teachers chase him, and with the entire English Department after him he disappears down the hall*).

(*The scene changes slowly to a bedroom again; the boy is seen running and yelling around the room. His mother enters to find out the trouble and he awakens.*)

Mother: What on earth is the matter with you, Jake?

Jake (rubs his eyes):

O–Oh, I just had an awful dream!

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ADAPTATIONS OF SHAKSPERE FOR PERFORMANCE IN HIGH SCHOOLS

EDWARD J. EATON
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When Shakspere's plays are considered as possibilities for production by high-school students, so many difficulties of scenic arrangement and costume suggest themselves that they are usually passed over as involving too much trouble and expense. They need not be difficult or expensive. The Elizabethan stage was radically different from ours, but by an adaptation of Shakespere's plays along the lines demanded by such physical differences, some of them can be produced with ease and effectiveness. Several of the comedies can be shortened and arranged for one or two scenes; and, so adapted, they become far more acceptable than many of the plays advertised as "suitable for high schools." Here is an account of what a class of tenth- and eleventh-grade pupils did with *Twelfth Night*, demonstrating that it was as actable and entertaining as a modern comedy.

The reading editions of *Twelfth Night* divide the play into five acts and nineteen scenes, which require at least eight different settings, involving twenty-four changes of scenery. It will be recalled that the setting of the first scene is a seacoast, and that the action then shifts in rapid succession to the Duke's, to Olivia's, to a garden, a chamber, a doorway, and wherenot. These difficulties we eliminated by a very simple device which made it unnecessary to shift the scene at all.

This was done by effecting a scenic arrangement to represent neutral ground, in the form of an Italian garden, or court, which was set a little back from the street that ran across the stage in front. At either side, near the front of the stage, high brick walls projected at right angles from the wings some five or six feet. These served to separate the street from the court, and gave the latter an air of seclusion. To the right of this court was the

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entrance to the gardens of the Duke's palace; and Olivia's private garden lay off the stage to the left. Persons coming along the street made entrances from either side in front of the wall, while the entrances from the palaces were made behind the walls. For this scene the setting may be made as elaborate as circumstances allow, or as simple as they demand. Red-brown paper tacked on frames and lined with chalk will look quite like brick walls; palms and box-trees, a piece of statuary, and a garden urn will create the atmosphere of an Italian garden. The back may be shut off by bushes placed against a curtain of cloth or paper, brown below and blue above. It is surprising what good effects can be gained by such simple devices.

The whole action of the play is made to take place on the neutral ground between the two gardens. A little thought and planning will make clear how the plot can be unfolded in this one scene. With the rise of the curtain, Viola and the sea captain enter along the street, and we learn of the shipwreck, the Duke's unrequited love, and Viola's sudden plan to enter Orsino's service. As they pass on, the Duke enters from his gardens to meet Valentine, who is returning from the embassy to Olivia. As the pair turn to the palace of Orsino, Sir Toby and Maria enter from Olivia's garden, to be joined soon by Sir Andrew, who comes from the street. As the trio depart, the Duke and Viola enter. After the Duke has left Viola, she meets Olivia and Maria, who enter from the opposite side.

Enough has been said to show how the scheme works out. By omitting some lines, by shifting others, and by changing a word here and there, the articulation may be kept complete. Just as much or just as little of the dialogue may be given as is desired. The whole plot and most of the comedy scenes may be presented in an adaptation running not more than forty-five minutes, while the division into acts and the shifting of scenes would consume an entire evening.

As You Like It and *Much Ado About Nothing* can easily be arranged for two settings, and other plays of Shakspere will lend themselves to the same treatment. If a defense is needed for so free a handling of the material, we can urge that Shakspere did the

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same thing himself with the best material that came to his hands, adapting it to the conditions that existed. In the one-act version that we presented, we lost nothing of the poetry and the splendid rhythm of the blank verse. At some points Shakspere's dramatic structure could not by any possibility suffer injury. And we made Shakspere a reality. Pupils enjoyed him as never before, and those who had the privilege of taking the parts are eager for a better acquaintance with the highest class of drama.

That dramatics have a proper and permanent place in our schools seems generally admitted now, and we may hope for decided improvement in the class of plays given by pupils. The Drama League, to be ultimately successful, may well lend its support to a campaign of education in the public schools, where the theater-goers of the next generation are now forming their tastes. Slap-stick comedy and farce, as found in hundreds of plays given by high schools and colleges, cannot create an appreciation of good drama. Enough plays of high grade are available to supply the demand, and teachers should insist upon good ones or none.

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DEVICES FOR VITALIZING COMPOSITION WORK

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

SARAH E. SIMONS
High Schools, Washington, D.C.

Of the devices tried for giving zest and vim to composition work *imitation* and *dramatization* have proved most effective in our high-school classes. Nor is this strange, for both these activities have a sound psychologic basis in human nature itself. The imitative and the dramatic instincts are found alike in the child of all times and races. To the free and unrestricted exercise of these impulses he owes much of his development. Who that has watched the child at play by himself or with others can doubt this? And what does a study of children's games reveal? They are nothing but little dramas of real life. The child instinctively acts out in his play the daily life he sees about him,

> As if his whole vocation
> Were endless imitation.

According to our new educational theories, instincts should be impressed into our service and utilized for our ends. Hence conscious, deliberate imitation of masterpieces and dramatization here and there of bits of literature have been encouraged in our classes. And results have been good, so good in fact that we now consider this part of our work past the experimental stage. Imitation and dramatization have become regular features of our English courses. More interesting, indeed more important, than the direct results are the incidental benefits of such tasks. The effect of the work is far-reaching. As a vocabulary study it is most valuable. The search for the right word often sends the pupil by devious word-strewn paths to his goal. This is particularly true if the exercise is to be in verse form. Again, the sense of having achieved—for the imitation or dramatization is an achievement—is stimulating to his creative power. But best of all is the fact that imitation

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and dramatization induce appreciation, that elusive something so eagerly watched for—alas! too often in vain—by the literature teacher. The measure of the pupil's appreciation is his imitation or dramatization, and to judge by our products it is widespread throughout many of our classes.

Such exercises are a part of the composition work in all the four years of our English course. Among the masterpieces which offer fertile fields for imitative and dramatic work are the following: The *Odyssey* (Palmer's translation); the *Robin Hood Ballads;* the *Tales of a Wayside Inn;* the *Van Bibber Stories; Treasure Island* and *Kidnapped; Sohrab and Rustum; Ivanhoe;* Chaucer's Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales;* the *Sir Roger de Coverley Papers;* Burke's "Speech on Conciliation"; Milton's "L'Allegro," "Il Penseroso," "Comus," and "Sonnets"; and Lamb's *Essays of Elia.*

An imitation is sometimes worked out jointly by the pupils and teacher in class. Then similar exercises are assigned as individual tasks. Subjects are often suggested by the teacher; at other times the choice is left to the pupils. The exercise is sometimes written in class, at other times at home. The pupils generally attack the problem with real zest, and take genuine pleasure in modeling after the master. They invariably show undisguised delight in listening to the efforts of their friends and fellow-workers.[1]

The dramatizations which the pupils make of parts of the novel or poem they are reading are seldom reduced to paper, though every now and then a scene is written out in full. The pupils are told to prepare a certain chapter or situation for presentation in the class at the next lesson. They must devise the setting and arrange the reading of the dialogue with as much ingenuity and realism as they can muster. And they do it, and joy in the doing of it. Such exercises are found to be a great stimulus to the imagination, that much neglected faculty in our current educational scheme.[2]

It is only the occasional boy or girl who can do nothing with

[1] For a fuller exposition of this work see my article, "Imitative Writing in the High School," *Ped. Sem.*, December, 1910.

[2] For an elaboration of this idea see *Dramatization of High School Classics* by S. E. Simons and C. I. Orr.

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these assignments. In such a case, of course, a substitute is allowed. The illustrations which I now quote are all of them typical. With perhaps one exception, noted below, the selection chosen is no better than many others in the same group. They are all first draft.

"DOWN TO THE SEA IN SHIPS"[1]

"DEAR MR. VAN BIBBER," the note ran, "We were all so surprised to hear from Mr. Carstairs that you are still in this country, as we understood that you were to leave for Venice on the first. If your departure has been delayed long enough, would it be possible for you to join our little house party here for a week or so? Our place is right in the Catskills, with mountains all around and a lovely little lake for a front porch. It is a jolly party, nearly the same as the one at Miss Arnett's, so please come, if you can, as we are all so anxious to see you again before you leave, etc., etc."

Van Bibber reflected. The note was signed "Dorothy Martin" and though entirely heart-free, he was far from averse to the society of this particular maiden. Besides, he did not sail for nearly two weeks and he realized that it would be rather dull in the city with everyone away. He wired that he would arrive on the following evening.

When his train pulled in he was accorded a joyous welcome and at dinner that evening, various plans were proposed to make the following week an enjoyable one for the soon-departing guest. The lake figured largely in these plans and the question was raised, did Mr. Van Bibber care for the water?

"Of course he does!" cried Miss Martin before Van Bibber could speak, "Don't you remember his winter in Florida?"

"That's so," said one of the men, "then you will be just the one to sort of captain us, Van, for to tell the truth, none of us are very competent seamen."

Van Bibber swore beneath his breath at the foolish impulse which had led him into relating glowing, if largely mythical, tales of canoe and sailing trips, after his return from Palm Beach the year before, as his principal knowledge of water consisted of the facts that fish live in it and that it is a healthful if not very palatable beverage. However, he decided not to back down, because you know, he might possibly get through without drowning himself or anyone else. So he answered carelessly, "Oh yes, I have had some little experience," but he felt uncomfortable and dropped the subject.

The week following passed pleasantly and uneventfully, for some kind Providence, so Van Bibber devoutly believed, had steered the interests of the party away from the lake and Sunday had come around without a paddle disturbing the placid surface of the water. Monday would see him on his way to the city, so he began to breathe more freely. And then the blow fell.

[1] Imitation of the *Van Bibber Stories*. First Year.

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"Oh, Mr. Van Bibber," cried Miss Martin, coming out on the porch with parasol and cushion, "do take me for a paddle! Here it is Sunday and we haven't been on the lake once, besides, it is so sultry on shore!"

Van Bibber looked around but everyone was comfortably paired off. There was no escape, so he led the way to the boat house, where he selected an ancient canoe, of unusual breadth of beam and badly in need of paint, which he had heard the caretaker say was safest for the ladies.

"But Mr. Van Bibber," said his companion, "the others are so much prettier!"

"Oh yes," replied Van Bibber, "but this will be more comfortable."

They embarked safely and every now and then as they talked, Van Bibber would very carefully insert his paddle and take a stroke, thus managing to acquit himself quite creditably.

The conversation was so engrossing that they paid no attention to their course, until, on rounding a little peninsula, a sound like rushing water caused Miss Martin to exclaim, "Why that must be the Rapids! I had no idea we were so close!"

Van Bibber began to take notice. He did not care for the sound of the word "Rapids." Sure enough, right ahead was the outlet of the lake, and there the water was rushing down a decline, foaming and splashing over rocks in a most alarming manner. It looked bad, and what was worse, Van Bibber perceived that they were drifting rapidly toward the broken water at the edge of the descent.

"What are you going to do?" asked his companion nervously, as she saw him start.

Their speed was increasing and Van Bibber realized that the canoe was beyond his control. "I er-think we will run them. The shore is too steep and rocky to land," he replied hastily.

Already the water was boiling under the bow of the canoe. The spray flew and the roar made Van Bibber wonder how he could ever have considered Niagara awesome. He closed his eyes, only to open them as a dash of water on his foot convinced him that they were sinking. Instead, the craft was fairly flying. The waves seemed about to engulf her. Their roar was as a thousand cataracts. A huge rock loomed up ahead. She must strike it! Involuntarily Van Bibber's eyes closed again. She struck with a grating shock. He must save his companion. He sprang wildly to his feet. She was sitting quietly opposite him. The canoe lay broadside to the sandy shore!

Silently they clambered out. Van Bibber looked back. The water roared and splashed happily over the rocks lining a perfectly clear channel. A child's rapids!

"I think," said he, "we will walk over to the house. I will send a man for the boat."

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HOW THE CUCKOO LEARNED TO CUCKOO[1]

A long time ago before birds could sing there lived by the sea a pretty wee gray bird with gray wings.

One morning he flew for the first time out of his soft nest and went down to the sea. It was a rather windy morning and the sea was dashing up against the rocks and singing a wonderful song. After the little bird had listened a dreadfully long time he said to the sea, "O great and wonderful sea whom all men do fear, pray tell me how you make so wonderful a noise?" But the sea only answered by dashing harder than ever against the rocks so that the little bird was scared and flew away.

The next morning the little bird went again and sat on the very same rock in the very same spot where it had sat the morning before. And after listening a dreadfully long time he said to the sea, "O great and wonderful sea whom all men do fear, pray tell me how you make so wonderful a noise?" But the sea answered just as he had before by dashing harder than ever against the rocks. So the little bird was frightened again and flew away.

The next morning was a beautiful windy morning and so the little bird thought he would go again to the sea and listen to the song. And after he had listened a great while he said to the sea, "O sea, whom all men do fear, pray tell me how you make such a wonderful noise?" And just at that identical second the sea stopped its wonderful noise and spoke with his wonderful voice saying, "O little bird listen to me and I will teach you how to make a noise so that you will become beloved of all mankind forever, and ever, and ever. Only first, little bird, you must promise me that every night you will think of me just as the sun is setting." And the little bird said, "I will promise."

Just then the sea began to make a noise just as soft and sweet as anything. The little bird listened and when the sea stopped he tried to make the noise and it sounded like this, "Cuckoo, Cuckoo." And the little bird was so pleased that he thanked the sea again and again for teaching him such a beautiful noise.

And the little bird never forgot his promise to the sea and that is why every single night just as the sun is setting the little gray bird begins and cuckoos until every little bird is sound asleep in his nest and every little baby in his mother's arms.

AN EVENING WITH FRIAR TUCK[2]

SCENE: A hermitage containing a rough table; a crucifix; two chairs; two stools; a rough bed and two closets, with open doors. A harp, quarter-staff, and several bows and arrows are seen in one closet. The other is the

[1] Imitation of the *Just So Stories*. First Year.

[2] Dramatization from *Ivanhoe*. Second Year.

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hermit's pantry, which is well supplied with delicacies. A grey cowl and gown are thrown on the bed. As the curtain rises the Friar is discovered alone.

CHARACTERS: Robin Hood and Friar Tuck.

FRIAR (*looking out the door*): What has happened to my good Robin? I fear me the king is in some trouble; he should have been here by the rising of the moon. (Closes door and starts to prepare supper, but is interrupted by a loud knock.)

FRIAR (*Softly*) I must be cautious. (*Aloud*) Who passeth by this way so late and what do they wish at the lowly hermitage of St. Dunstan?

(*Friar quickly but quietly hides chairs in a corner; closes closets, and dons his cowl and gown.*)

VOICE: It is a poor wanderer, who begs a drink from the holy spring of the blessed St. Dunstan.

FRIAR: Wait thee until the faithful servant of St. Dunstan finishes his evening devotions.

(*A groan from without.*)

FRIAR (*severely*): Have patience.

(*Friar extinguishes one of the two torches which light his hut, and deadens the bright fire with wet moss kept for that purpose.*)

FRIAR (*mumbles to himself*): It is well I had some moss. He shall not know I am preparing for a feast tonight. And by the saints he shall draw the water himself!

(*Friar takes a small wooden cup and opens the door.*)

FRIAR: Weary wanderer the drink from the holy spring wherein the good St. Dunstan baptised five hundred heathen between sunrise and sunset will do thee far more good if thou dipst the water for thyself. Take the cup and follow this path to the holy spot.

WANDERER: Praised be the name of St. Dunstan.

FRIAR: May the good saint bless thee. (*To audience*) These weary wanderers are getting too troublesome of late. They interrupt my evening feasts.

WANDERER (*returning cup*): Thank thee, Holy Clerk, for the good thou hast done me.

FRIAR: Pass on thy journey in peace. (*Friar closes door.*) And still no Robin. (*Placing dainty food on table, removing cowl, and bringing chairs from the corner, Friar mumbles.*)

FRIAR: And that was a mighty slap the king laid upon his humble servant, and I think me the one I gave should not have been so hard had I but known it was—(*Loud knock.*)

FRIAR: That is surely Robin Hood. Whosoever passeth by—

VOICE (*impatiently*): Open to Locksley!

FRIAR: Ah! 'tis time. Why are you so late? Has something wrong befallen the Lion Hearted king?

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ROBIN HOOD: No, Richard is safe with our trusty outlaws, but there was a fair maiden—

FRIAR: It seems to me you are too willing to aid fair damsels.

ROBIN: Ah! but she was in trouble. How did you enjoy your play with King Richard?

FRIAR (*angrily*): Speak not of that or by St. Dunstan you will regret it!

ROBIN: Come, good Friar, do not be angry. Let us fall to. This feast looks tempting.

FRIAR (*recovering his good spirits*): Take a chair and help thyself.

(*The two seat themselves and begin their dinner.*)

FRIAR (*with his mouth full of pastry*): Who was the fair lady whom you had to aid?

ROBIN: Ah! Ha! It was Isaac with the Lady Rebecca.

FRIAR: Where is my share of the spoils?

ROBIN: Do you think I would rob a helpless Jew?

FRIAR: Helpless, indeed!

ROBIN: Bring forth the harp and give us a tune. It has been many weeks since you and I have been together.

FRIAR (*getting harp*): I have not touched the good harp since the king was here.

ROBIN: Bring it forth and fill up our cups with the—

(*Robin is interrupted by a shrill blast. He springs to his feet.*)

ROBIN: Quick, on with thy cassock of green; we must out. Something is wrong.

FRIAR (*throwing off mantle and discovering suit of green*): There are too many wanderers about tonight.

ROBIN: Quick! Stop your foolish prating.

(*Robin and Friar leave the hut together.*)

THE DESERTED MILL[1]

Beside the stream, that winds o'er yonder hill,
There stands the dreary, silent water-mill.
Here often have I seen the ripe corn ground,
And, wond'ring, watched the busy wheel go 'round.
But now those happy, prosperous days are fled,
And in the eaves the owlets make their bed.
This happy spot, which once such thrift displayed,
Is now deserted by the hand of Trade,
For she the ignorant souls to towns has lured,
With stories false of wealth to be procured.
But once, in those sweet days of long ago,
The scene was one of mirth, and not of woe.

[1] Imitation of the *Deserted Village*. Third Year.

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The happy miller, careless, in his way,
Sang lustily his cheery song all day.
And every morn, in sunshine or in rain,
The passers heard his tuneful, quaint refrain:
"This world for each of sadness has its fill,
So let us bear to'ard no one an ill-will."
On market-day, in finery bedeckt,
His wife would come the mill-place to inspect.
With her she often brought her only child,
A tender blossom like the roses wild.
Perchance, oh stranger, turning from the way,
You see a spot, hidden from light of day.
Bend closer! see, beneath the tangled weeds
There lies a stone, and the inscription reads:
"Beneath this sod there rests a gentle maid,
But like the dainty blossoms, she did fade.
In London-town she lived a year, you see;
But smoke and fog with her did not agree;
And so we brought her here where flowers abound,
And laid her body gently in the ground."
Yes, stranger, wipe the tears you vainly shed,
And then—with gentle reverence, bow your head.
This maid was not the only one to die
When farmers heard the town's alluring cry.
Far better had it been for them to dwell
In ignorance, in some sequestered dell,
Than to attempt a life of ease and pride.
Far better, yes, far better to have died!
For, when a man is made for work and toil,
'Tis useless the Creator's plan to foil.
Then let each with his own lot be content,
And thus he can consider life well-spent.

TO MY VALENTINE[1]

O thou, than any other, art more fair,
Thy lips are like the coral reefs at sea,
On which full many a sailor wrecked may be,
And o'er thy shoulders streams thy golden hair.

But when I look into thine azure eyes
From which thou gives't me many a loving glance,
I see both mirth and sunshine in them dance;
Then dream I that I'm gazing at the skies.

[1] Imitation of *Elizabethan Songs*. Fourth Year.

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Thou seems't to me to breathe a purer air,
An atmosphere more fitting to thy grace.
The purer air of heaven is thy place.
(O would that I might have of it a share.)

O lady fair, for thee alone I pine,
Pray, wilt thou be mine own true Valentine?

SONNET[1]

To those the night is blind, who take delight
In nought but pleasure and in follies free.
To those 'tis given, who love the shadowy night,
Its spaces infinite, its starry sea,
To look beyond, far past, the glittering bound
That garish day hath fixed as furthest mark
Of human eye, and with cleared vision, sound
The inmost depths of Heaven-revealing dark.
The sight may pass the utmost stars that lie,
By hand Divine placed nearest to his seat;
The eye may pierce beyond, but to the eye
Black void is there unless a vision sweet
To inward eye gives grace, to see such light
As saintly Milton saw, through endless night.

"THE NECESSITY OF LOWERING THE STEPS AND PUSH-BUTTONS OF THE LOCAL STREET CARS." A SPEECH DELIVERED BEFORE THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE DISTRICT[2]

I hope, Gentlemen, that, notwithstanding the great number of times that this subject has been discussed before you, your good nature will incline you to some degree of indulgence toward human frailty. Surely it is an important subject, or there is none so which engages the attention of the entire feminine population.

My proposition is the convenience of the travelling public. Not the convenience of the corporation, whose sole interest is to make money. Not the convenience of the wealthy, with their touring-cars. Not the convenience of the manufacturer, who wishes to save time, labor, and material. Not the convenience of the young athlete, with his strength and agility. It is the simple convenience of the vast army of people who must use the cars daily in pursuing their vocations. I propose, by removing the grounds of difference, and by restoring the former comfortable equipment of the cars, to give permanent satisfaction to the people; and to reconcile them to the workings of a corporation which now seems to consider not their convenience, but only its private gain.

[1] Imitation of Milton. Fourth Year. [2] Imitation of Burke. Fourth Year.

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The capital leading questions on which you must this day decide are these two: First, whether the company ought to concede; and, secondly, what the concessions ought to be. To enable you to determine both on the one and the other of these questions with a firm and precise judgment, I think it may be necessary to consider distinctly the true nature and the peculiar construction of the object which you have before you.

The thing that you have to consider with regard to the nature of the object is, the large number of cars, all of this objectionable construction, in the possession of the company, which have been purchased within the last year or two.

You must next consider the peculiar construction of the cars. The lowest step is so far from the ground that it cannot be reached without great difficulty. The push-buttons on the interior of the cars are so high that they cannot be used without rising from one's seat.

Then, Gentlemen, from these two capital causes: the height of the steps from the ground; the inaccessible location of the buttons—a spirit of indignant protest has grown up among the people.

In consideration of the first of the two capital questions, i.e., whether the company ought to concede, I say that if a corporation wishes to succeed, it must consider the desires of its patrons. The wishes of these patrons should not be sacrificed to mere financial gain, especially in the instance of a corporation formed, supposedly, for the convenience of the people at large, and upon which they so necessarily depend, and which they so constantly patronize, Hence the corporation should yield to the popular demand. It remains to be seen what the concession ought to be.

We grant that these cars were purchased without the knowledge that they would prove so inconvenient to the patrons; and as they are all new stock, we do not go so far as to demand that they be disposed of at a sacrifice, and entirely new cars be bought. But with a comparatively small expenditure the cars could be reconstructed and the faults complained of be remedied.

In behalf of the company, some one may say that the cars are entirely satisfactory in all other respects; that the evils referred to are but minor ones; and that the company should not be put to any expense. But we maintain that the aforesaid evils are not minor, but very serious ones. So much so that the question of expense should not be taken into consideration. Generally speaking, the cars are more used by women, children, and elderly people, than by the young, strong, and athletic; and to all except those of the latter class, the question of climbing to an exceedingly high step involves danger as well as serious inconvenience. To sum it all up, we may say, an evil that can be remedied should not be tolerated.

Therefor, Honorable Commissioners, I move you—

That since the high step and inaccessible button are very inconvenient, the company remedy these evils in some manner satisfactory to the travelling public.

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EDITORIAL

THE CLOSING YEAR

With this issue the *English Journal* completes Volume I. The year's record is one of remarkable activity and hopeful progress. The *Journal* itself has found a large and sympathetic audience, and it has served as the medium for many writers and varied themes. All that its sponsors hoped for it has come to pass and more besides.

Not the least important of the functions of the *Journal* has been the pleasant duty of reporting the doings of various societies of English teachers. Chief of these is, of course, the National Council, which has reached in a twelvemonth every state but two and which, because of its numbers, representative character, and comprehensive plans of work, truly deserves its title. In that same period no fewer than nineteen state and city associations have affiliated themselves with the Council. Seven of these societies were recently formed and nine others are in process of formation at the present time. The combined membership of these federated groups will exceed five thousand. Teachers of English, who only yesterday were notorious for eccentricity, seem about to attain to union of the most useful and organic character.

The forces which have generated the movement are not far to seek. English has been put forward during several decades as the central subject of the curriculum, and has been so administered as to demand immense labor of the most exacting character, without at the same time receiving adequate provision in equipment and teaching staff. Moreover, the content of the courses, particularly in the high schools, has been determined by aims in large part foreign to the chief purpose of the schools. The results could not be wholly satisfactory under such conditions. If now we add lack of training in methods of instruction and equal lack of permanence in the teaching corps, we have cause enough to induce those who are vitally interested in English teaching to crave conference and mutual support.

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The trend of thought and discussion in the field of English is unmistakable. It is away from the academic and toward the practical and the efficient. By the latter is meant not merely the ability to strive successfully for a livelihood in business and the professions, though this in itself is worthy, but also the capacity to serve the community and to live finely and richly for one's self and one's intimates. Now, efficiency of this sort is to be developed by perfecting the life of the present, by inducing right attitudes and securing adequate performance in the tasks and pleasures which fill the life here and now.

Hence progressive teachers in all parts of the country are emphasizing practice in public speaking and other forms of oral expression, the making and producing of plays, the critical examination of modern books and magazines, the writing of letters and papers to serve some immediate purpose, the practice of conscious self-direction and self-criticism in both speaking and writing, the reading of books for needed information or for the joy of human interest and of art, spontaneous discussion, simple and natural reading aloud to convey the sense, and other activities of like nature. All this is in sharp contrast to the drilling in of unused facts, which has so largely characterized the English work of the past. It has been sufficiently demonstrated that the old process does not secure results—except in the examination room, of course—and thoughtful workers are sure to turn increasingly to new methods.

It is significant that college men, aware that the teachers of the schools are on the way to solve their own problems, should cease to talk of what the institutions below ought to do in order to make good college work possible and should begin to consider the weaknesses of college English itself. There seems to be no doubt that the market is overstocked with fledgling Doctors of Philosophy, who jostle each other in eagerness to discover an opportunity for adding to the sum of human knowledge and who are ultimately employed in the attempt to teach youth just from the schools the art of expression and of reading. Now, this is a task at least as useful if not so honorable as that of unearthing some obscure fact of linguistic or literary history, and it requires

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training of precisely the opposite character from that which peculiarly fits a man for pursuing in the cloister some object of individual scholarly interest. The teacher of undergraduates must work with and through the group.

Much is to be gained, no doubt, by the use of more exact and scientific methods of testing the results of English teaching than those now in use. Progress is slow so long as change must come through mere shifting of opinion. Demonstration is more convincing than argument, and it appeals strongly to those trained in modern methods of thought. Many who have long scoffed at "pedagogy" are now visibly impressed by "experimental education." It seems clear that the *English Journal*, in company with other magazines of like character, must in the interests of its constituency, devote large space to the scientific as opposed to the purely theoretical and inspirational. It will, in any event, continue to serve the societies with which it is identified, and it will be found on the side of those who look to the future rather than on that of those who look to the past.

THE EFFICIENCY WAVE

It is interesting and stimulating to see how the efficiency crusade, which is sweeping over all fields of business and industry, is gaining ground among educators. As a matter of fact, a quiet succession of investigations has long been going on in the schools, and Mr. Taylor's illuminating discussion of the number of pounds of pig-iron a laborer can carry in a day was far antedated by numerous school and college investigations. Nevertheless the efficiency wave is so big that it seems to have swept everything along in its course, with the result that analogies from business efficiency are often falsely carried over into fields where they have no place. Mr. Birdseye's "college scrap heap" (in the *Reorganization of Our Colleges*) was as fallacious in the way he referred to it as was some years later the efficiency measure of a college professor in terms of "student hours."

The construction of a concrete scale of measurement by Professor Thorndike and Mr. Hillegas seems, as a piece of scientific work, to

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be as Professor Michelson's determination of the length of a meter through the measurement of light-waves. Whatever way you look at it, there seems to the inquirer to be no gainsaying that "differences equally often noticed are equal, unless the differences are either always or never noticed." There is no getting away from this generalization. The establishment of a measurement of composition representing the rankings of several hundred carefully selected judgments is therefore a monumental and dignified achievement.

To the casual and even careful observer, however, one all-important factor seems to be missing before the application of this standard of measurement to country-wide student composition can be made, and this is, just as there are certain to be variations in the independent judgment of compositions, there are certain to be variations between the applications of the Thorndike measure to the same pieces of written work. If "the several hundred carefully selected judges" can be subsidized by popular subscription and prevailed upon to read all the written work put out by the American school and college youth, the standardizing plan is sure to work perfectly, but otherwise at first, and even at second glance, we seem to be no better off than before in any practical way.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SECOND ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL

An account of the second annual meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English will appear in the January number of the *English Journal* together with several of the papers which were read. Other papers will follow in succeeding numbers. Besides this material, a number of articles of timely character and of the deepest interest are in hand or in preparation. Our friends will do well to make sure that no break in their subscription occurs.

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THE ROUND TABLE

A USE FOR THE "JUST-SO STORIES"

We have in our high school at Terre Haute an English course somewhat different from that of other schools of the kind, in that it provides for a required course of twenty weeks in composition. To this course our Junior B's come no better, no worse prepared than any other high-school Juniors would. They dread the beginning, for they have heard how difficult it is to produce anything original—anything beyond a summary of what someone else has already written. They know, too, how terrible are the exercises in Woolley's handbook and how obstinate is the teacher in the matter of correct spelling, punctuation, and sentence construction. The teacher dreads this start, because she knows what uninteresting subject-matter, what weak arrangement of details, and what abominable sentences will be presented at first for her consideration.

Realizing the existence of this condition of affairs and the fact that, if the work was to accomplish more than the primary aim of giving the youngsters the ability to write a grammatical sentence and a coherent paragraph, some inspiration must be infused, I searched our public library through when I was given my first B-third classes, and settled my choice for material upon Kipling's *Just-So Stories*.

Nor have I since been disappointed in my choice. Every time I use these tales I find in them a fresh value. First of all, there is the matter of plot. A kangaroo being made different from all other animals in a way he hadn't expected and a whale being outwitted by a solitary mariner, afford plots of such original elements, simple analysis, and concrete treatment as fire the vivid imaginations of the youngsters to white heat. It merely remains, then, to temper these imaginations later with such stories as "John Chinaman," "The Cask of Amontillado," "The Fight with a Trout," or "The Necklace of Pearls," and the rigid, barren quality of mind gives way to a spontaneous, easy fertility.

The children are not hard to wean away from the "Sunday-school story" plot to this new variety, where there is not always a good poor child abused by a vicious mate and a reward in the end. But they cling tenaciously to a host of superfluous incidents and characters. Let them see that only the 'stute-fish and the mariner were responsible for the whale's difficulty; that the Djinn needed only the man, the dog,

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and the horse to teach the camel his lesson; and that the Parsee alone punished the rhinoceros—let them see this and the whole of the unnecessary friends and relatives of the chief actors in their narratives retire quietly as if by magic. With these characters disappears also the unwieldy introduction, as giving rise to them; and particularly so if the attention of the youngsters is called to the fact that very little is known of the camel's past history, or of the leopard's family, or of the jaguar's childhood. The number of incidents used is also curtailed when the children see that the story of "The Elephant's Child" contains only four, "How the Rhinoceros Got His Skin," two, and "The First Letter," really only one incident.

The point of greatest weakness with these youthful writers is their conventional phrasing and their limited vocabulary. Every story begins with "Once upon a time" until Kipling's expressions of "In the days when everybody started fair," "In the high and far-off times," and "Hear and attend and listen" are made stepping-stones to such a beginning as this of Poe's: "It was about dusk, one evening during the supreme madness of the carnival season, that I encountered my friend." Few descriptive adjectives do the youngsters make use of at first; and an apt one or one with a euphonious sound only very rarely. For this reason, we generally go over very carefully in class one of the stories and pick out such expressions as: a blackish, bulgy nose as big as a boot; a wait-a-bit thorn-bush; great grey-green greasy Limpopo River; the precession had preceded according to precedent; and the scalesome, flailsome tail. The children can tell easily enough why they like these combinations; and after imitating them for a while are able to appreciate and take for examples such constructions as: "The thrilling secrets of the birth of time," "the red ruin of his face," "the red-hot wind from the westward was booming among the tinder-dry trees and pretending that the rain was on its heels," and even "on a lone winter evening when the frost has wrought a silence."

In figurative language, too, the *Just-So Stories* afford some pithy examples which make their appeal, both as expressions giving pleasure and as excellent models. Some of these are: "little wavy grey lines on their backs like bark on a tree trunk"; "it tickled like cake-crumbs in bed"; "like a mustard-plaster on a sack of coals"; and "like sunshine sifting through the trees." From these mere comparisons, the children themselves soon turn to Tennyson and Dickens and the other authors they have studied for a wider range and deeper significance in figures.

One other purpose, and not the least important, do these stories

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serve—that of creating the habit of concrete, definite expression. It soon becomes quite plain to the youngsters that Kipling gains a great deal of the force by his concreteness, as in: "they were so hungry they ate rats and beetles and rock-rabbits"; "he took flour and water and currants and plums and sugar and things, and made himself one cake which was two feet across and three feet thick"; and "the elephant's child asked questions about everything that he saw or heard or felt or smelt or touched." With such illustrations in mind they no longer have their hero go "a long distance" or locate the story in "a small town"; the long distance becomes five dreary miles, and the small town, Cartersville.

EVA A. RUMBLEY

PARAGRAPHS AS TRAINS

Frequently my students, in fun or perhaps in jest, refer to the passing trains as "paragraphs." An explanation may be found in the following comparison which, with good results, I often enlarge upon in the classroom.

A paragraph is like a train. The train must have an engine just as a paragraph must have a topic sentence, for as the engine supplies the power for the one, so the topic sentence holds the dynamic for the other. Just as a train is made up of a number of different kinds of cars, so a paragraph is composed of a variety of sentences. As in the one, however, the cars must be closely linked, so in the other the sentences must be smoothly joined. As a train must run along a well-prepared track, which has been cut through the hills and bridged over the streams, so the paragraph must follow a well-defined line of thought which has smoothed out the rough places and filled in the valleys. As the one carries the commerce and travel of the world, so the other conveys the thoughts and ideas of the mind.

L. W. CRAWFORD, JR.

EMORY AND HENRY COLLEGE
EMORY, VA.

COMPOSITION THAT SEEMED WORTH WHILE

Not all high-school pupils write perfunctorily, though I readily admit that many of them do. Very few of us, however, do anything with enthusiasm unless it happens to fit our fancy or appeals to us as being especially worth while. Composition work has to be vital or ten to one the pupil will find it more lifeless than Latin—if one thing

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can be more lifeless than another; at any rate it will be infinitely more tiresome, and the work that he gives it will be in exact proportion to his interest.

This year I had a class of Seniors and postgraduates in "advanced composition," so called principally to coax the ambition of its members. Firmly believing that much depended upon the teacher in the interest the course might develop, I started in with fire in my eye, which I saw reflected in the eyes of the students for about two weeks. It was not surprising that the gleam slowly faded, however, for the grammar reviews that I assigned at the beginning—which many of them sorely needed—were not exciting enough to make them especially nervous. That light of interest came and went spasmodically as we took up new phases of the work. A particularly good paper they never failed to appreciate, and the stories that we found and criticized in the current magazines were responsible for much of our animation.

However, there were days when I was discouraged, when it seemed as though we were not accomplishing enough. I had tried to arouse the ambition and pride of the students by assuring them of ability, unusual and heretofore hidden. But the general response was, "Aw, I can't write anything!" and finally the conviction that they couldn't, born of the frequent repetition, began to settle upon me. It was interrupted occasionally by a paper that startled me, and once I was thoroughly excited. This particular theme was a character-sketch that had a great deal of possibility, I thought.

At a reckless moment, when I wanted to give the pupils something *different*, I hit upon the plan of sending something away, and I sent the sketch to the *Outlook*. I took it to a late train that very night before I could change my mind, and went home to worry about the foolish move—worry that was increased in a few days when the parent felt that the manuscript should have been sent to *Everybody's*. Well, I decided that *Everybody's* should have the next chance at it, and tried to forget the whole affair except in my prayers, when I asked with fervor that the readers on the *Outlook* staff be in the proper mood when they came to our little paper. They surely were, for after three long weeks a letter came, containing, not a printed rejection slip, but a check for thirty dollars! Neither the little author nor her father were half as happy as I, for hadn't the incident proved what I had been preaching all the time—that composition work *is* worth while?

But the stimulus it gave that class!

The pupils sat up like plants after a shower; the gleam in their

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eyes deepened to a steady glow, a pledge of the confidence that was coming over them. Everybody fairly bristled with energy, and it was immediately noticeable in the papers. My discouragement oozed away; I had been cranking my machine for over half the year, but at last the spark caught and my chief office was to be as careful a guide as possible. The rest of the term was real joy-riding!

(The story referred to is "The Manner of My Adoption" in the *Outlook* of May 12, 1912.)

LITA BATTEY

HIGH SCHOOL
HUTCHINSON, KAN.

AN A-Z (AISY) METHOD FOR MARKING THEMES

A is for Accurate; you have not said
Precisely the thing that you had in your head.

B is for Bravo; it means you have won
Your teacher's approval; your work is well done.

C stands for Construction; your sentence is weak
Because it was not built with care, so to speak.

D is for Doubtful; your meaning's in doubt;
Ambiguity's fatal; cast the oaf out.

E is for Emphasis; points that are strong
First or last in the theme or the sentence belong.

F is for Facts; you will scribble in vain
If a grip on these churls you don't get and retain.

G is for Grammar; your grammar's at fault;
On the fortress of syntax you've made an assault.

H is for Hackneyed; the story you've told
In the days of Nebuchadnezzar was old.

I stands for Instructions. Learn to obey.
He who humbles himself is exalted, they say.

J is for Joining; each sentence should lead
By an easy transition from those which precede.

K is for Key-Word; your title should be
To open your subject an accurate key.

L is for Length; your story's too long;
Brevity marks most writing that's strong.

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M is for Matter; your matter's too light;
Nine-tenths of your work should be done ere you write.

N is for Number; pray take it from me
That subject and verb should in number agree.

O is for Order; your words are arranged
In an order which may to advantage be changed.

Punctuation! Such errors can mostly be traced
To a lack of grammatical training or haste.

Q stands for Quotation. Quotation marks show
How much of your wit to others you owe.

R is for Redundant. Pray note and take heed:
Don't repeat words or thoughts unless there is need.

S is for Spelling; you've misspelled a word;
Noah Webster will teach you wherein you have erred.

T is for Tense; don't flounder and flop
From Father Time's feet to Eternity's top.

U is for Unity; ash-pile and dough
Were never designed in the parlor to go.

V is for Vulgar, and slang is a thing
That a parrot can use as well as a king.

W is for Words; they are quaint in their ways;
Some other word here will better the phrase.

X is a Cross, often used as a dot,
Because it is plain when a period's not.

Y is for Youth; if you're indolent now,
You'll be ditto when age has wrinkled your brow.

Z is for Zero; pray take up your pen,
And with painstaking care write this paper again.

EDWIN L. MILLER

CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL
DETROIT, MICH.

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NEWS AND NOTES

THE SECOND ANNUAL MEETING OF INDIANA TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

When the Indiana Association of Teachers of English was convened for the opening session on November 8, in Indianapolis, a hundred members from all sections of the state were present. The colleges, normal schools, high and elementary schools were all well represented. This made possible a consideration of the questions presented in vertical section, from the college to the primary school, a view not often taken, but still very suggestive. The discussion and debate in the round tables, under this arrangement, proved to be very enthusiastic and stimulating.

The program, centered around the drama, was opened by Mr. R. W. Jenkins, librarian of Indiana University, who talked upon "How the Play Is Built Up." For his illustrative matter he used Shaw's *Widowers' Houses*. The speaker's witty and keen analysis of Shaw's method was made clear by a careful synthesis of the play out of the apparently incongruous elements chosen by the playwright.

The second address was made by Mr. F. Tarkington Baker, dramatic critic of the *Indianapolis News*, who spoke on "The Function of Dramatic Criticism." He made very clear the truth that the public shapes the drama, that because the crowd is always inclined to yield itself to its emotions, there is a place for the critic. He must feel it his duty to be an alert and sympathetic observer of all that constitutes life. He must school himself to feel as deeply as his neighbor, the casual theatergoer, but to preserve at the same time his intellectual equilibrium. He must feel and think. Such a course will enable the critic to discover what the artist is and to communicate the discovery to others.

These two addresses furnished the teachers with a new impetus toward reading and study for their own enjoyment, and a new viewpoint from which to view and judge the modern theater.

The more professional aspects of the general topic furnished the basis for two spirited round tables on "Teaching the Drama in Schools" and on "Dramatization as Composition." This latter topic was made effective by illustrating impromptu dramatization by a few pupils under the direction of Miss Alice O'Hair of Indianapolis.

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At the members' dinner seventy-five sat down, and listened with much pleasure to an address by Dr. W. D. Howe of Indiana University on "English Politics," being an account of observations made during a recent sojourn at Oxford University.

Committees on conditions of teaching and on the results of English teaching reported progress and were continued.

Officers were elected as follows: President, N. W. Barnes, DePauw University, Greencastle, Ind.; Vice-president, Miss Adelaide S. Baylor, State Superintendent's office, Indianapolis; Secretary-Treasurer, Miss Odessa Zeiss, Wabash, Ind.; Editor, W. N. Otto, Shortridge High School, Indianapolis; Member of Executive Committee, Miss Elizabeth Williams, Richmond, Ind.; Research Committee: E. H. K. McComb, Indianapolis; Superintendent A. O. Neal, Kokomo, Ind.; Principal C. B. McLinn, New Albany, Ind.; Social Committee: C. Augusta Mering, Indianapolis; W. N. McMillen, Fort Wayne, Ind.; Ella Laughlin, Columbus, Ind.; Press Committee: W. L. Murray, Hammond, Ind.; C. M. Curry, Terre Haute, Ind.; Louise Thrall, Evansville, Ind.

THE ENGLISH CONFERENCE OF THE WISCONSIN TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

The English Conference of the Wisconsin State Teachers' Association held two meetings, November 8 and 9, in Milwaukee. The first meeting was the larger, it being the regular meeting of the Conference. Mr. James F. Hosic, of Chicago Teachers College, addressed an audience of something over three hundred, on the subject: "The Relation of the High-School Course in English to the Student's Life after School." The discussion was opened by Mr. Swiggett, a newspaper man of Milwaukee, and was participated in by several teachers. The talk by Mr. Hosic and the trend of the discussion evinced a growing belief that we English teachers must not attempt too much, and that if we can send out students who can say what they have to say in clean, straight sentences, and who are able and inclined to read with fair intelligence and discrimination, we shall have done enough; more, alas, than we are doing now.

The following morning, for the first time in its history, the Conference held a Round Table, and it proved an unqualified success. There were short papers on "Student Correction of Themes" and "The Possibility of Greater Uniformity in High-School English." Both papers gave rise to spirited discussion, and the Conference voted to take up the

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second subject next year, with a view to publishing a pamphlet setting forth the views of the Conference on matters of punctuation, and other moot questions of usage. Those present also went on record as unanimously opposing any tendency on the part of the N. E. A.'s Committee on Grammatical Terminology further to Latinize the terminology of English grammar.

The Conference applied for association membership in the National Council of Teachers of English.

C. R. ROUNDS, *Chairman*

MILWAUKEE, WIS.
November 16, 1912

KANSAS ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

The meeting of the Kansas Association of Teachers of English, held at Topeka, November 7 and 8, was the largest assemblage of the kind ever seen in the state, filling the First Presbyterian Church beyond its seating capacity. Two sessions were held: that of Thursday to discuss the attitude of the high schools toward the grade teaching of English, and that of Friday to present the chief difficulties that grade teachers find in teaching the English language. At both sessions Mr. Percival Chubb of St. Louis was the principal speaker; and his topics were the correlation of subjects and schools, and oral training in both reading and composition.

All parts of the program proved to be of exceptional interest and value; and as was intended, it served to indicate certain specific directions in which the activities of the Association should find employment at once. The central question of both sessions, What action is most pressing for the aid of grade teachers and the strengthening of grade teaching of English? seemed to receive an indirect answer from the fact that all teachers alike complain of the lack of sentence-sense in pupils after they have completed their formal course in grammar; this of course indicating something fundamentally lacking in that formal course, and suggesting that special effort be made by the proper committee to trace the difficulty to its source and find a remedy. It was hinted that a possible remedy might be found by abolishing formal grammar from the grades altogether, or reserving it for the higher grades, and teaching the subject incidentally in connection with reading and composition work till pupils are familiar with the practical application of elementary principles before they ever see a grammar or suspect that they are studying the parts of speech and the nature and structure

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of the sentence. The Association Committee on Elementary School English has assumed this investigation of the grade teaching of language as its particular duty for the immediate future, under the direction of Superintendent John F. Bender of Arkansas City.

The high-school committee, chairman Miss Lela F. Douthart, of Kansas City, Kan., reported progress under the direction of the National Council Committee on English Training of High-School Graduates, and was continued. Two new committees were created: one on Oral English, the chairman to be named by the Executive Committee; and one to make collection of Kansas folklore through the schools, chairman Miss Mary Dougherty of Kansas City, Kan.

Some slight changes were made in the form of the constitution of the Association as formulated in March, and with these changes, the constitution was finally adopted. The chief amendment was made to secure the continuity of policies and work by electing a majority of the officers each year from the Executive Committee of the preceding year.

The officers elected were: President, Superintendent L. A. Lowther of Emporia; Editor, Professor J. W. Searson of Manhattan; First Vice-president, Miss Jessie Mustard of Mankato; Second Vice-president, Professor E. M. Hopkins of Lawrence. The Secretary-Treasurer, Miss Charlotte M. Leavitt of Topeka, serves for three years from November, 1911. As delegates to the National Council were elected Miss Lela F. Douthart, Kansas City, and Mrs. Mary S. Compton, Hutchinson; Professor J. W. Searson and Professor E. M. Hopkins to serve as alternates.

One hundred new members were enrolled in the Association, more than half of whom also subscribed for the *English Journal*. The total membership of the Association, notwithstanding the unprecedentedly large attendance at its sessions and the equally marked interest in its program and its work, is still below two hundred; and a large addition is necessary before the Association can make progress with its most important plans, especially those relating to grade English. Kansas readers of this report can aid the work of the Association most vitally and effectively by securing new members, and by sending names to the secretary-treasurer at Washburn College, Topeka. Blanks will be furnished on request.

E. M. Hopkins, *President*
Charlotte M. Leavitt, *Secretary-Treasurer*

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IN NORTH DAKOTA

The North Dakota Association of English Teachers was organized on October 23, at Grand Forks at the time of the annual meeting of the State Education Association. The attendance at this first meeting was large and representative, and the Association starts its work with great enthusiasm. A Committee on the Course of Study in the High School was appointed, to report at the next meeting. It is proposed to have a thorough discussion of the needs of the boys and girls in this state, and of the best ways of meeting these needs. The Association voted to affiliate at once with the National Council. It also applied for and secured recognition as a section of the State Education Association. As officers for the ensuing year the following were elected: President, Professor A. E. Minard, of the Agricultural College at Fargo; Vice-president, Miss Amy Evans of Minto; Secretary-Treasurer, Miss Edna Twamley of Grand Forks; Executive Committee, these officers with Miss Bertha Dailey of Hillsboro, and Professor Vernon P. Squires of the State University.

PRELIMINARY ORGANIZATION IN OKLAHOMA

Twenty-five teachers of English in the colleges and high schools of Oklahoma met in Oklahoma City, November 16, to effect the temporary organization of a state council, or association, and to prepare for the first annual meeting, which will be held in the same city during the Christmas holidays.

The officers of the temporary organization are: President, T. H. Brewer, head of the Department of English, University of Oklahoma, Norman; Secretary, F. C. Oakes, Professor of English, Central State Normal, Edmond.

A committee was appointed to draft a constitution for the new organization before the December meeting. The members of this committee are: Professor Barrett, head of the department, Oklahoma A. and M. College, Stillwater; Professor Sloat, head of the department, Northwestern Normal, Alva; and Miss Mayall, head of the department, Oklahoma City High School.

The program for the meeting, which will be held in conjunction with the meeting of the State Teachers' Association, December 26–28, will be arranged by the following committee: Professor Brewer, Professor Oakes, and Mr. Edgar A. Rippy, head of the department, University Preparatory School, Tonkawa.

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The teachers present were enthusiastically in favor of every movement looking toward the improvement of the conditions under which English is taught in all of the schools of the state from the lowest to the highest.

It is likely that the state will be divided into several districts for the purpose of quarterly, or semiannual, meetings.

THEODORE H. BREWER

UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA
November 17, 1912

The autumn meeting of the Public Speaking Conference of Ohio Colleges was held at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio. The address by President Robert I. Fulton, of Wesleyan University, was on "What Courses Should Be Offered by a College Department of Public Speaking?" Among the topics considered were Original Public Speaking in Colleges, Interpretative Courses, College-Entrance Tests in Oral Expression, The Status of the Course in Public Speaking. The Conference voted to apply for membership in the National Council of Teachers of English.

The English section of the Iowa State Teachers' Association, at the recent meeting in Des Moines, took steps to form an Iowa English Council in affiliation with the National Society. The Committee on Organization is composed of Professor B. Roland Lewis of Ellsworth College, chairman; Miss Grace Lambert of Cedar Falls, and Miss Ellen Geyer of the State University of Iowa.

BOOK NOTICES

[Mention under this head does not preclude review elsewhere.]

De la méthode littéraire. By J. BEZARD. Paris: Librairie Vuibert, 1911. Pp. 731.

Journal d'un professeur dans une classe de première. A full and specific account of the French method of teaching literature and composition in the *Lycée.*

The Teaching of English. By C. LINKLATER THOMSON. London: Horace Marshall & Son, 1912. Pp. 38. 6*d.* net.

Two lectures, one on English in elementary schools and the other on English in secondary schools, with suggestive lists.

Die Sprache des Kindes. By ARTHUR WRESCHNER. Zürich: Art Institut Orell Füssli. Pp. 43.

One of the most recent summaries of the psychology of language development in children.

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Admission to College by Certificate. By JOSEPH LINDSEY HENDERSON, PH.D. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1912. Pp. 172. $1.50.

A useful historical study.

Teaching in School and College. By WILLIAM LYON PHELPS. New York: Macmillan, 1912. Pp. 186. $1.00.

Brilliantly written and conservative in point of view. As might be expected, the author's illustrations are drawn largely from English.

The Dramatic Method of Teaching. By HARRIET FINLAY-JOHNSON. Edited by ELLEN M. CYR. Boston: Ginn & Co., 1912. Pp. 196. $1.00.

An attempt by a teacher in British elementary schools to base school work on the free activities and instincts of children.

The Theory of Teaching. By ALBERT SALISBURY, PH.D., Chicago: Row, Peterson & Co., 1905. Pp. 330.

The author combines elementary psychology with the study of principles of teaching. No previous study of psychology seems to be assumed, and hence the subject is supplied with a practical interest from the first.

The Personality of the Teacher. By CHARLES MCKENNY. Chicago: Row, Peterson & Co., 1910. Pp. 192.

Chapters: "The Love of the School"; "Personality"; "Sympathy"; "Sincerity"; "Dynamic Knowledge"; "Good Breeding"; "Growth in Personality"; "The Joy in Living."

The English Teacher's Manual. To accompany the study of Thomas and Howe's Composition and Rhetoric. By L. A. PITTENGER. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1912. Pp. 116. 25 cents.

Wordsworth. By E. HERSHEY SNEATH, PH.D., LL.D. Boston: Ginn & Co., 1912. Pp. 316. $2.00.

A study in "personal psychology." The Life and work of Wordsworth are traced to 1814.

Types of Prose Narratives. A textbook for the story writer. By HARRIETT ELY FANSLER. Chicago: Row, Peterson & Co., 1911. Pp. 646.

A very ingenious classification of narratives, with numerous illustrations from standard books and from students. Much of the material reflects the author's experiences as a teacher in the Philippines.

Public Speaking: Principles and Practice. By IRVAH LESTER WINTER. New York: Macmillan, 1912. Pp. 390. $2.00 net.

A discussion of principles, followed by examples for various occasions, such as public lectures, informal discussions, after-dinner speeches, etc.

Indian Sketches. By CORNELIA STEKETEE HULST. Longmans, Green & Co., 1912. Pp. 114. Illustrated.

Beautiful and heroic stories from the history of the Northwest Territory. The writer has had access to unpublished sources and has worked up her material with fine literary skill. The work is a charming addition to our stock of books that are worth while for children.

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